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NAN DARRELL;

OR, THE

GIPSY MOTHER.

VOL. I.

Printed by T. C. Newby, Angel Hill, Bury.

NAN DARRELL;

OR,

THE GIPSY MOTHER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"THE HEIRESS," "THE MERCHANT'S DAUGHTER."
" THE SQUIRE," " THE PRINCE AND
THE PEDLAR," &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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NAN DARRELL;

OR,

THE GIPSY MOTHER.

CHAPTER I.

I met a little cottage girl,
  She was eight years old, she said.
Her hair was thick with many a curl
  That cluster'd round her head,
She had a rustic, woodland air,
  And she was wildly clad;
Her face was fair, and very fair,
  Her beauty made me glad.
Wordsworth.

WHAT a glorious day! Not a heavy cloud in all the sky, only a few fleecy forms floating across the rich blue vault; and the sun shining out in all its summer splendour as though it had never shone before, looking down for the first time on the gladsome earth, instead of having run its course unnumbered years—undimmed in lustre—unimpaired in power.

Where are the works of man? his labours of the past? The eye looks on ruin; or time hath swept away even that poor trace; and a fable or tradition alone remains. But time hath no power over the Eternal or the works of His hands—itself His slave.

Out! Out! treading the green turf—lying on some flowery bank—dreaming beneath the leafy shade. Who would be pent up within four stone walls on such a day, when he could forth with the blue above, and the green below, and a thousand gleesome things around? What though the walls are gilded, and the lofty ceiling fretted; the persian carpet soft as the woodland moss; whilst the luxuries of art, the beauties of genius, lend their splendours with a gorgeous profusion? Still it is only a magnificent prison. We see but little of the blue heaven; scarcely more of the varied tints of earth. The air we breathe is close; and the heart flutters to be free, as the imprisoned butterfly on the first day of spring.

Who would not rather go forth into the fresh, free air, than be a prisoner even in a gilded cage? And nature, is she not more beautiful than art? Doth not that beauty make the step more buoyant, and the heart more light?

How one loves a summer day with all its gentle glories—its murmured music—its delicious fragrance—its warmth, gladdening, not oppressing—its soft and soothing air—its dreamy feel, its shadows, and its lights—its brilliant visions, and its stirring thoughts—and more, far more, its loving memories! Alack! Alack! that in our changing clime there should be few such days! But then we love them all the more even for their very rareness. What high born beauty would set store upon her diamonds, if every beggar girl could boast the like.

It was just on one of these rare days, which some so rave about, that Mrs. Arnold, leaving the inn, at Cowford, with a sketch-book in her

hand, strolled through the little, straggling village, whilst the blacksmith, who promised well, however he might perform, tried his skill in repairing her carriage, too much injured in an encounter with a loaded waggon in a narrow lane, to allow her to proceed upon her journey. With all our partiality for the little village of Cowford, the horror of slandering, even a country inn, we must acknowledge that its best room, we will say nothing of its worst, was neither lofty, gilded, nor fretted. Its boards, bare, save a small space in the centre covered by complicated pieces of worsted and packthread, could not well be mistaken for a persian carpet, whilst its decorations in the way of art or genius were limited to a display of glass and china, in a corner cupboard, (the broken parts turned to the wall), an old fashioned mug in the centre of the mantel-piece, flanked by two white cats with red and yellow collars, bought of the wandering Italian boys, that if they caught no mice, at least stole

no cream, and lived most amicably with two parti-coloured parrots, the workmanship of the same skilful hands.

Nothing could exceed the civility of the honest landlord, and landlady; and their distress at her accident, and pleasure at her having escaped unhurt, were expressed with a warmth, whose sincerity could not be doubted, though when more interested motives came into play, they could not be expected to feel any very great regret for the harmless chance which placed in their little yard an elegant carriage with handsome arms, certainly not an every day occurrence. But the host's civility, though exerted to the utmost, could not perform the supernatural. The best room continued small, close, and unpleasant from a stale smell of tobacco; and Mrs. Arnold, refined almost to fastidiousness, though unwilling to annoy her attentive hostess by complaints, was glad to escape from her repeated excuses for all things being in a

caddle, as she said, and seek proper aid, and subjects for her pencil, in the environs of the secluded village.

And see! she has found a subject for her pencil. Not in a stately cathedral—not in an ivied ruin, with its tale of the days gone by —not in rock or mountain, the poor little village of Cowford could boast of none of these for there was nothing about it that could even hint of the sublime in art or nature; no, her pencil is employed on three village children, not fancy village children, such as painters imagine to adorn the walls of the wealthy, but real, bonâ fide village children, dirty, ragged, merry little creatures. Kings and Queens on their thrones, with their bowing courtiers might be grander, and more gorgeous; but I doubt if ever one was happier than two at least of those ragged, and untended children.

To be sure cleanliness is all very proper, and very delightful; but somehow or other, children do find great pleasure in playing in

the dirt; at least, I know one that did, despite all the exordiums of all the nursemaids; her loving mother, as long as she was well and active, never heeding an extra frock or two in the week, or hands a little more grimy than befitted a young lady, and really I don't think her hands look much the worse for it, though I do sometimes marvel how they ever became clean again. Now-a-day girls must not gambol in the dirt, or in the clean; they must play woman from the very cradle. What a blessing to have been born a hundred years ago.

Mrs. Arnold finished her sketch to her satisfaction, as regarded two of her subjects, but candidly admitted her third attempt to be a failure; and yet but for that third she would scarcely have been at the trouble of taking the sketch. She looked again, and again; she touched, and retouched; rubbed out, and put in, and then gave up the attempt in despair:—she had the features, but she

could not catch the expression. If for one moment she flattered herself that the likeness was complete, the next she had the mortification of perceiving that such a belief had been but self delusion.

The two other children were drawn to the life: fat, healthy looking little creatures, with no graces but those of childhood; who would grow up strong, sturdy peasants, fitted for the wear and tear of life, having bodies to bear its labours, and its ills; and minds not formed of such delicate materials as would aggravate the evils of the actual, or add those of the imaginary. These were on her paper exactly as they were in life; the oldest, a girl of eight, all laughter, and good humour: the youngest, a boy of two, occasionally joining his fainter, and less joyous laugh to that of his companions, yet more often giving tokens of a fretful and impatient spirit; but to depict the third was beyond her power; and she gave up the endeavour. It was not

so much that her features were more delicately moulded than those of her companions, it was that the expression of those features was never the same for five minutes together; in this lay her power of attraction, and the impossibility of representing her correctly. A sunny joyousness, a loving softness, seemed at times, the natural expression; but whether such really was the predominant temper of her mind, it was impossible for a stranger to decide, though none of this changeableness could have been assumed to mock or attract that stranger, for Mrs. Arnold, hid by a clump of firs, had not been perceived by the children. Long after the pencil had been laid aside, did the traveller continue to gaze on the laughing group.

The scene of their sport was a rather marshy green, varied with some small hillocks, scarcely larger than ant hills, and tall tufts of rushes. Ducks and ducklings were swimming over or floating down the shallow stream, that

bounded the green on the right, gurgling over its pebbly bed with large shoals of the little minnow, glancing, sporting in its chrystal waters. A rustic bridge with its narrow plank and single rail, was thrown across some paces higher up ; and scattered cottages with small orchards and smaller gardens, bounded the home view on the other side of the brook. The sun shone out on this little green, with its irregular hillocks, full upon the playful children ; but not with oppressive power, for a gentle breeze came off the downs over the secluded village which was situated in an extensive hollow.

It was a day all life and joy. The pettish boy was seated on one of the hillocks, whilst his sister and the younger girl, particularly the latter, exerted all their powers to amuse him.

" There, James, look ! oh, pretty ! pretty !" cried his little nurse, for such she was, though not many years older than himself, " There,

look! look!" pointing out some pieces of broken crockery which she had arranged to the admiration of herself and the other girl.

James looked for a moment with a half smile, then, turning away with a discontented cry, plunged his hand into a dirt pie by his side, whose size and skilful building, a former work of his nurse, had before won his approbation.

"Don't cry Jemmy, don't cry, look here!" exclaimed his indefatigable amuser, catching up the pieces of pottery, and flinging them round and about with the grace and flexibility, though not the skill of an Indian Juggler.

The tiny laugh of the fretful infant mingled with the joyous burst of his better tempered sister; then it died away—a frown came again over his heavy brow, and with a peevish wail, and vexed shake of his head and shoulders, he turned sullenly away, looking desiringly on some scattered flowers which had before amused, and then disgusted.

"Oh, the flowers, Jemmy, dear! do you want the flowers? Well, don't cry, and you shall have them;" exclaimed the girl, without the shadow of ill humour at his peevishness, picking them up and placing them in his lap, from whence he immediately threw them with the petulance of passion.

"Don't you like them? see! see pretty flowers!" showering them down upon him with coaxing words, in despite of his fighting, till even his ill humour was vanquished by her patience, and the frown disappeared.

"Now that is a good boy, Jem," she exclaimed, passing her arms round his neck, and kissing him; then, starting up, she flung the flowers over her own head, and that of the little girl beside, many clinging to their ragged dress and tangled hair. "Now, Jemmy, laugh! laugh! I'll dance for good little Jem;" and away bounded the graceful child, keeping admirable time to her own sweet humming, now advancing slowly, with

almost stately elegance; then springing rom side to side with the quickness of the glancing trout; and occasionally turning little Jemmy's sister, who, less active, and almost convulsed with laughter at her companion's play, made no attempt to join the dance.

"Look! look, Jemmy, how pretty!" exclaimed his sister, clapping her hands with joy, as the young dancer, inspirited by the shouts and bursts of laughter of her charges, increased her exertions to amuse them, till want of breath compelled a cessation of her efforts, notwithstanding the tyrannical monosyllable of the baby looker on;—"More! More!"

"Who taught you to dance, my little girl?" asked Mrs. Arnold, advancing from the clump of firs by which she had been screened.

"No one, ma'am," replied the child, rising from the green on which she had flung herself and making a courtesy, hanging her head half

abashed at the presence of a stranger, yet half won by her kindly smile.

"Then you have taught yourself, and like dancing," continued Mrs. Arnold, not from any suspicion that she had really taken lessons of Vestris, or D'Egville; but simply because she knew of nothing better to say, and wished to hear those gentle tones again.

"Jemmy and Susy like me to dance ma'am; and I love Jemmy, don't I?" kissing the sturdy boy, who was far too deeply engaged in staring at the stranger, and deciding whether he should cry or not, to heed her endearment.

"Are they your brother and sister?"

"No ma'am," she said with another courtesy, venturing to look full in her face, "I have no brother, and no sister, these be Susy, and Jemmy Watts; and I take care of them!"

Mrs. Arnold could not but smile at the protecting air assumed by the fairy like

looking creature before her, younger than her oldest charge, to judge from her appearance, and of a far more slight, and delicate figure.

"So you take care of Susy and Jemmy Watts:—but who takes care of you?"

"God, ma'am, when I am good, and try to do as he bids me."

Mrs. Arnold was touched with the feeling and simplicity with which this was said. It was not the mere utterance of the lips; the repetition of a lesson; it was evident that however deficient her knowledge on other points, she felt she had a heavenly protector, and was anxious to obey his will.

"Have you no mother?"

"No ma'am, mother has been gone this long time;" and the former joyous expression left her features:—she had known the want of a mother.

"And no father?"

"No! little Kate has no father, and no mother," shaking her head sadly.

"Poor child!" said Mrs. Arnold pityingly. The girl looked up in the stranger's face, and involuntarily pressed closer to her side. Children and dogs can out-Lavater Lavater, without knowing his rules—they can tell whom to trust, and whom to love.

"You good for nothing, idle slut!" exclaimed a woman in a wrathful voice, rushing from a neighbouring cottage, and dealing little Kate a forcible box on the ear, as she passed her in her course to the shallow stream in which master Jemmy was wading, to his great delight, shooing and shouting to frighten the ducks, having taken advantage of his nurse's attention being occupied by the stranger to pursue his own devices, the which invariably tended to evil towards himself, or others.

Poor Kate uttered a sharp cry, and then half smothered some heavy sobs, hiding her face in Mrs. Arnold's gown against whom the force of the blow had thrown her.

It was the work of a minute for the robust virago to snatch up the kicking boy, cover him with kisses, despite his struggles, and stride back towards the cottage.

"Get in, you little wicked slut! you would let Jemmy be drowned any day. I'll be the death of you, if you do. Get in! I say; and don't tumble the lady's gown," giving the child a violent push towards the gate, and bestowing another on Susy, as she added, "that little wretch makes you as bad as herself."

"It was all my fault," interposed Mrs. Arnold, speaking gently to the fury, in the hope of softening her wrath, and saving the girl from further punishment. "I kept the poor child talking to me."

"It is all one for that. She have done the same a thousand times," replied the woman bluntly. "Some hurt will certainly come to my Jemmy; and as sure as there does, I'll be the death of her;" coaxing and caressing the

still struggling, squalling boy, who gave way to his anger at having been deprived of the pleasure of wading in the wet, and frightening the ducks.

"Indeed you are wrong. Little Kate is very fond of your boy, and has been trying to amuse him for the last half hour; besides, that stream would scarcely drown an infant of six months."

"No odds to you whether it would or not; and the good for nothing little wretch would as soon let Jemmy go in where it was deep, as here. I'll teach her to mind what she is about;" striding on to the cottage as she spoke with a look that made Mrs. Arnold shudder.

"Stop! Stop! listen to me! I am sure the little girl will be very careful for the future."

> "'Twas throwing words away, for still,
> *The wrathful woman held her will.*"

She neither stopped nor listened to the

stranger's mild address, but strode on more fiercely to the cottage, fastening the wicket behind her with a padlock as soon as she had entered.

"Ah, ma'am, poor little Kate leads a sad life; and the more a body talks, the worse Betty Watts is, pitiklar when in her tantrums, like now. She'll beat the poor child all the more 'cause you spoke, and to spite you ma'am for standing here. Would you please to walk into my poor cottage? You seems frightened and no wonder neither," continued the speaker struck by Mrs. Arnold's paleness, as that lady turned from the wicket over which she had been leaning towards the person who addressed her, a pleasing looking woman, tidily dressed.

"Thank you, I am indeed shocked. Could nothing be done to save the poor child?" she asked, as the sobs of little Kate came from the closed cottage.

"I am sure ma'am, I wishes there could,

for a better child never lived; always willing and civil to her betters and elders;—and so kind to all the little ones; and that Jem Watts have got the temper of his mother—enough to vex a saint—and Betty making him worse by spoiling on him, as she does, she don't care for any one else in the 'varsal world. Then to see poor little Kate playing with un by the hour together, and letting un pull her and thump her about, and she never giving a cross word, and always looking contented, and never speaking agin him, or his mother, though she beats and half starves her. I am sure I wonders how she lives through it; nobody else could that was not as sweet tempered; and if the neighbours did not give her some scraps sometimes unknown'st to Betty. I wish some one would take her clean away, and so does all the village; for every one likes little Kate."

"Is there no one to interfere?"

"Lauks! ma'am, who is there? But please

to walk a little further this way, there is no use in angering Betty Watts, by letting her know we be talking of her; she is always ready to do a spiteful thing. You see ma'am her husband is overseer, and don't like to be meddled with, though to be sure he bean't as bad as his wife; and there is no gentlefolks here to meddle; and Mr. Binks of the King's Head, tho'f he's sorry for the child, can't do nothing, 'cause Betty says she is cousin to her mother, and bought her, as a body may say, with an old hat, and some other things. Then Kate warn't born here; and nobody knows which is her parish."

"I thought she told me that she had no mother."

"She had as good have none, and better though she ain't unkind to her, when she is here; but then she has been away these three years, and may be dead for aught we knows. It is hard to say where Nan Darrell is."

"Is she so unnatural as to go and leave her child to strangers?"

"Lauks! ma'am. Nan an't like other folks: she is crazy, poor thing, and don't know what she does, and would sell any thing in the world for a bit of finery, fancying herself a lady, and telling every body to courtesy to her."

"Poor Kate, indeed!" said Mrs. Arnold with a sigh. "Has she no father?"

"No, ma'am; and as a body may say, never had. Poor Nan came back to the village some years ago with little Kate, a baby, and pretended to be very grand, and said she had a rich husband, and when she came again she told us he was dead. She did not stay long, for there is gipsy blood in her, so she can't bide quiet any where; and she has not been seen these three years, though she seemed fond of the child, and cried when she left her. I wish something could be done for little Kate,

all the neighbours cry shame, but that only makes Betty worse; and you had better not go to the cottage alone, ma'am, for she would as soon beat you as the child, when she is in one of her ways."

The history of the poor child dwelt on Mrs. Arnold's mind during her walk back to the inn, as also during the very primitive repast provided by her attentive landlady. The answers of Mrs. Binks confirmed all she had heard of Kate and her mother, and Mrs. Arnold, the gentlest and kindest of human beings, puzzled herself to devise some plan by which the child might be secured from the power of her tyrant; for the forming of which plan there was more time, as the faithless blacksmith had not kept his word; and it would be late in the evening before she could pursue her journey. She could not have dismissed the child from her thoughts had she wished it; the animation, the varying expression of her delicate features, the

richness of her joyous laugh, the wild grace of every movement, had made too deep an impression to be easily effaced; and she retraced her steps towards the little green with some faint hope of again encountering the girl without her tyrant, when she might learn what were her own wishes. Her hope was gratified:—she had scarcely reached the fir clump when she encountered little Kate with a pitcher in one hand—a bunch of flowers in the other. The child set down her pitcher to make a lower courtesy, looking at Mrs. Arnold with a sad, yet grateful expression; and would then have proceeded, had not that lady stopped her.

"I am afraid, poor child, your talking to me gained you a beating."

"Never mind, ma'am; if she had not beat me for that, she would for something else."

"Does that cruel woman often beat you?"

"Oh yes! ma'am, very often;" and the

poor girl shuddered, putting her hand involuntarily to the side of her head, which still showed signs of the violence of the blow; then added, as if willing to excuse her: "but then ma'am, she says I deserve it. Yet indeed, indeed, I try to be good, and do as she tells me. I hope I shall do better when I grow older."

The stranger could not but be touched with her humble, forgiving, hopeful temper.

"Where are you going with that pitcher, and those pretty flowers?"

"Home, ma'am."

What a home! thought Mrs. Arnold.

"Would you like some of the flowers, ma'am? Granny Wheeler let me pick them for little Jemmy to please Mrs. Watts; but two or three will do for him, only I must not stay," casting a hurried look towards the cottage.

"But don't you like flowers yourself my

little girl? asked Mrs. Arnold, stroking back the tangled, sunny locks from the open brow, as she took the nosegay held timidly towards her.

"Yes ma'am, very much; but then I like to see Jemmy and Susy play with them better: besides, Mrs. Watts says I must work."

"Here is something for the flowers, Kate," said Mrs. Arnold willing to try her further.

"Oh no ma'am, thank you. I don't want anything:—you spoke so kind—and Granny will give me plenty more. You are very welcome," drawing back with instinctive delicacy.

"Yes, I am sure I am welcome; but if I take your flowers, you must take this," holding out a bright crown piece.

It was irresistible.

"What a pretty white penny!" exclaimed the child, snatching it in an ecstacy of delight,

then letting it fall again into Mrs. Arnold's hand with a crimson blush, ashamed of her eagerness.

"Take it Kate; it is yours."

"Mine? oh thank you ma'am!"

"And what will you do with it?" asked the giver, after allowing her to enjoy its possession for some moments undisturbed.

"Keep it ma'am; and look at it;" exclaimed the child with quickness, clutching it firmly as she spoke.

"But it would buy many things, Kate."

"But then I should not have it to look at, should I?" enquired the child with increasing confidence.

"Certainly not," replied Mrs. Arnold with a smile; "but you might buy things quite as pretty, and more useful."

Little Kate was silent for some moments, turning the white penny over, and over; now grasping it firmly, as though she feared to

lose it, then putting it off a little way as if to ascertain her power of enduring a separation from her treasure. It was a hard trial. The stranger watched her movements, and the varying expression of her features; but was silent. The decision should be her own.

That decision was made—the pretty white penny was hid by the closing fingers; and the eager questioner pressed close to Mrs. Arnold, looking up in her face with the simple trust of childhood.

"Will you buy Granny Wheeler a Bible with it? a great large one, that she can read? If that is not enough, here is this;" producing a penny and a farthing from some secret plait in her ragged frock, where these treasures had been hoarded for many a day, more in gratitude to the donors, than from any innate miserly propensity. "Won't you buy it?" she asked in a disappointed ton, finding that Mrs. Arnold made no reply.

"Do you want nothing for yourself?" enquired that lady. "Should not you like a new frock?"

"This is ragged to be sure;—and Jenny Milsom laughs at it;—and it is dirty too," remarked the child, looking down upon her dress with a sad and thoughtful air; and then again questioning with increased eagerness. "Would it buy both?"

"It is not enough at present to buy either: but you shall have whichever you choose."

Little Kate scarcely hesitated.

"Then, ma'am, please buy the Bible for dear Granny. She is so kind,—and teaches me to read—and gives me something to eat—and I am often very hungry; and I can try and wash my frock—and Mrs. Watts says it is quite good enough for me. Besides I have a better for Sunday; and must not, mind Jenny's laughing. Granny will be so glad!"

The tears came into Mrs. Arnold's eyes

and she could not speak. The child saw her emotion, yet guessed not that it was caused by her own generous self-denial; but thinking only of the reason why her own tears fell, pressed still closer to the stranger, and taking her hand looked up in her face with a gentle pity, her own eyes glistening as she spoke.

"Poor lady! does any one beat you too? And you so good and kind. I wish I was a great, big man and an overseer; and then no one should hurt you."

Dirty, ragged as she was, Mrs. Arnold snatched the astonished child to her heart, giving way to a passionate gush of tears as she did so. She had before fancied a resemblance to her own little girl, taken from her at nearly the same age, and at that moment she almost believed that it was her darling Mary, returned to her from the grave.

"Kate! Kate! What are you about, you little idle wretch?" called out the wrathful

Mrs. Watts across the green, having watched the child behind the clump, and being unable to account for her delay.

"Oh ma'am, I must go;" exclaimed the terrified girl, bursting from the arms that still detained her, snatching up her pitcher, and hurrying towards the virago, whose loud scolding might be heard at a considerable distance.

Calming her emotion, Mrs. Arnold came out on the green in time to see the furious Betty Watts force little Kate into the cottage, using awful threats the while. Emboldened by her indignation, the usually timid and gentle traveller would have faced the fury alone, probably to the advantage of none concerned, but fortunately, she espied, at a little distance, her footman, and Mr. Binks, who was doing the gracious and hospitable, showing the lions of Cowford to his guest. A beckon brought them to her side; and a few words explained her wishes and intentions.

Mr. Binks did not look particularly delighted at the idea of encountering the furious Betty Watts; but as Mrs. Arnold entered the cottage first, it was impossible to refuse her request to follow.

That lady's movements had been hastened by cries of pain, and well was it for little Kate that the impulse of humanity had for once supplied the place of decision of character.

The child was crouching in a corner with clasped hands, pleading in vain for pity. A broad red mark across her neck showed that one blow had already been given, and the stick was descending a second time, when Mrs. Arnold, springing forward, threw her arms round the girl to protect her, who, on her part, with a joyful cry clung closely to her preserver, whilst the footman seized the falling weapon, and tore it from the woman's grasp.

"How dare you come here?" demanded Betty fiercely, placing her arms a-kimbo, and

eyeing the intruders with such wrathful looks that Mr. Binks drew back.

"For your own sake be silent!" said Mrs. Arnold in a more commanding tone than she had ever used in her life before. "Your cruelty to this poor girl is deserving of punishment; and your violence is disgraceful. You a mother, and not feel for a child! Little Kate goes with me."

"Who are you, that you should take her? She is my cousin's child, and left to my care;" replied the woman a little less fiercely, somewhat awed by the manner of the speaker, though still looking willing to attack her, but for dread of the tall footman.

"I am not one who will suffer cruelty, to a defenceless child," remarked Mrs. Arnold with gentle firmness, moving towards the door with the still sobbing Katherine clinging to her.

"Jem, Jem, don't let her go!" screamed Betty to her husband, who entered the cottage

at the moment. "You be overseer; and the girl's mother is my cousin."

Jem seemed perplexed as to the course most likely to satisfy his furious wife, and not offend the lady and her determined looking attendant. As usual with waverers, his conduct contented none. He asserted his right of retaining the child as being overseer and related to Kate's mother; but that right was asserted too faintly to please his wrathful consort, and served him nothing with the stranger.

"This not being the child's parish you can have no right to interfere; particularly as I undertake her future maintenance; whilst the ill treatment she has received, of which you must have been aware, will warrant me in taking her from your charge. Let her go with me without further violence, or I apply to Sir Thomas Lenster, who is one of my oldest friends."

"I am sure, ma'am, I never did the child no harm; and you may take her, if you please," stammered out the overseer, alarmed at the threat of an application to Sir Thomas Lenster, well known as a rigid magistrate: but his wife, though also a little frightened, would not yield so easily.

"You are a chicken-hearted fool, Jem. Nan Darrell left the child with me, and I cannot let her go with a stranger. If children do wrong they must be beat."

"Who wants Nan Darrell? Here she is!" exclaimed a cracked voice. "But you might shew better manners, and call me Lady Darrell," continued the new comer, a wild looking little woman, drest in the most fantastic style with worn out finery, passing Mr. Brinks, and advancing into the room with a half proud, half mincing step, and a mock gracious air.

"Just come in time, Lady Darrell," said Betty Watts with pretended respect, seeing

the advantage to be gained from winning her cousin to become her ally. "Just come in time. This strange lady wants to take little Kate away with her, no one knows where; but I be sartin sure that you won't let her."

"Who is the lady?" asked Nan Darrell with a ludicrous assumption of dignity.

"One of the best ladies that ever lived; who has plenty of money; and will take good care of the child," replied the footman quickly, offended at her question, and her manner.

"Why do you answer? let the lady speak for herself:—you are only a servant," remarked the poor, crazy creature, with a haughty toss of the head highly displeasing to the footman, turning her back upon him as she spoke.

His mistress's presence and immediate reply checked the expression of his wrath.

"I am Mrs. Arnold of Beechen Cliff, and will take great care of the child, who has been cruelly treated by your cousin.

Nan Darrell looked at the speaker, and understanding her superiority at a glance, answered promptly and joyfully, in better language than could have been expected, making awkward courtesies as she spoke.

"The child shall go, for you are a born lady I can see; and you shall teach her to dance, and play music, and all that ladies do; for I'll tell you what," coming close up to her and laying her finger on her lip, "but you must not tell again, little Kate is a lady too! You shall know how some day or other; so you must take great care of her."

"A lady! Is she not your child?" asked Mrs. Arnold struck with the woman's earnest manner, and the wild graces of her portégé, not often found in village children.

"My child! To be sure she is! Who says she is not? And ain't I a lady? a lady in my own light?" demanded the poor creature angrily, mincing about with pretended dignity

and arranging a scarlet rag thrown round her as a scarf.

"Depend on my taking great care of the child," observed Mrs. Arnold, distressed at her display of folly, though scarcely able to suppress a smile, and wondering at herself for having woven a romantic tale with that dirty ragged child as heroine, based on the idle dreams of madness. If there was a something in the child superior to the common run, as there undoubtedly was, there required little imagination to believe that her now crazy mother might, in her better days, have boasted something of the like superiority. There was evidence of gipsy blood, though something softened in the dark eyes, and locks of the crazy mother: and though the child's hair was of a sunny brown, instead of a raven black, she too had a dark hazel eye with a bronzed cheek.

"Be a good girl, and do as the lady tells

you," observed Nan, approaching her daughter who had for some time been looking at her, though still holding Mrs. Arnold's gown.

Kate made no reply, but clung closer to her protectress with a perceptible shudder justified by the wild light in her mothers' eye.

"Will you go with me, Kate? Or stay with your favourite Granny Wheeler, or some other friend?" asked Mrs. Arnold.

"Go with you:"—exclaimed the child with a passionate energy she had not shown before, whispering, as her protectress stooped to calm and caress her: "they will beat me, when you are gone;" glancing in alarm at Betty and her mother.

"You shall go with me, my poor child."

"Why Nan Darrell you sold her to me:—you know you did," exclaimed Betty Watts.

"Sold her indeed!" replied her cousin, indignant at the charge. "I said you might take care of her a bit, whilst I went on my

travels. But how could you teach her to be a lady I should like to know? and is she not to marry a great lord one of these days—else a king? And is it fit that she should wait on your children? I shall go to court then; and let the king kiss my hand;" she continued spreading out her robe, adjusting her tawdry rags, and bridling up to look grand. "I shall be a great lady myself then."

A burst of laughter from all but Mrs. Arnold, who was shocked at this folly, and Kate who was frightened, aroused the poor creature's wrath.

"You may laugh now; but when Kate is a Queen, and I am a grand lady, you shall all be sent to Bridewell."

"Never mind their laughing," said Mrs. Arnold soothingly; "but remember, in the presence of all here, you give up little Kate to me, engaging not to claim her again."

"Yes, she may go with you; but mind this; she will be a grand lady one of these days."

"What makes you think so?" enquired Mrs. Arnold, curious to ascertain the origin of her belief.

"Ah, my lady! you are very sly," exclaimed the woman with a peculiar expression; "but I will tell you--only you must not tell again," she added, speaking in a confidential whisper. "My mother knew all things—and I know more than people think. I know,—What a pretty handkerchief?" breaking off abruptly, and smoothing down Mrs. Arnold's dress. "Could not you give me a few of these things? Kate's mother should be handsomely dressed. I do the best I can, but the fashions change, and a lady in her own light should have clothes like grand people. Just a new hat now with feathers; I have had this some time," pointing to the

one she wore, whose appearance certainly did not belie her assertion.

"Come to the King's Head, and I will see what I can do for you," replied Mrs. Arnold, gently.

"Thank you;" courtesying low, "you are a real lady, and know how to speak to one like yourself."

Nan Darrell went to the King's Head; but all Mrs. Arnold's endeavours to learn more of her history were baffled by the want of memory, and incoherence of insanity. She could not remember where little Kate had been born, or the exact day of her birth, though she declared she had the certificate of her own marriage; the christening of the child, and some other papers hid safe away; adding in a confidential, and mysterious tone; "It would not do to let the overseers, and the magistrates have these things, they might send me to bridewell;" a threat so frequently

held out in her various wanderings, that it ever stood forward in her thoughts. On two points she seemed clear and decided—that the child's father was dead; and the child herself just turned of seven; but of her late husband's connections she knew, or would tell nothing; breaking off a lament for his death to admire Mrs. Arnold's shawl, or point out the beauty of her own wild attire, imitating as she did so the movements of a peacock when displaying its tail.

This dearth of information as to the child's family was the less regretted by Mrs. Arnold, as, having heard and seen much of the folly of educating children above their natural sphere, thus entailing misery upon them, she prudently resolved that little Kate should be fitted for no higher station than lady's maid, or housekeeper. She left money for poor crazy Nan, as the children called her, with Mrs. Binks, to lay out as she thought best; besides presenting her with a coloured hand-

kerchief, and some other trifles, the objects of her especial admiration. Little Kate, after taking an affectionate leave of GrannyWheeler, and promising to send her a great, big Bible, was dressed in her best clothes; and the strange lady's carriage left the King's Head, at Cowford, late in the evening, amid the bows and courtesies, the stares and hurras of the simple villagers, who rarely saw so grand a lady, and whose approbation she had won by her kindness to the child.

CHAPTER II.

Le tems passe, mais l'amitié reste.

Time flies! Nothing like originality even in a quotation! Time flies! Ten years have passed since little Kate, the ragged, dirty, ill-used, yet generally happy child, left Cowford with Mrs. Arnold, half laughing, half crying; one instant clinging to her protectress and smiling in her face, then looking from the window, clapping her hands with childish glee at the wondrous speed with which the trees, the hedgerows, and the houses, galloped past.

Children certainly are not philosophers, however wise they may be in their own conceit; but then they are happy! And what is the aim of the philosophy of our later years, but to win back, though with much toil, only a semblance it may be, of that happiness involuntary in our childhood? You tell the child that not a hill, a hedgerow, or a house, is moving on:—she may not say that she does not believe you—but how can she? Does not she see the hills, the hedgerows, and the houses, sweeping past? Time proves her error; but no future drive can vie in pleasure with her first.

We laugh at the folly of children:—are we grown up folks so very much the wiser? Do we never think that we alone are stationary, whilst all beside are moving on? That we alone—our hearts—our minds—our forms—have known no change, whilst all beside seem strangely altered?—or if we speak of change, is it more than a murmur of our

the lawn into the well furnished drawing room to give one more look at the setting sun, one more glance at her favorite flowers. Mark the elegance of her attire, simple though it be; the unembarrassed grace with which she winds her way amid the various ornaments of the apartment: the half bounding, and half stately step with which she treads the mossy carpet:—see her kneel beside that couch with the assured confidence of valued love—see her who reclines upon that couch, happy in her presence, part the rich ringlets from her brow, turning the curls through which run seeming threads of gold round her thin fingers; then press her lips on that fair creature's cheek, murmuring the words, "dear Kate." Mark the respectful manner of the servant, the very same with Mrs. Arnold ten years since at Cowford, as the young lady gives an order. Listen to Mrs. Shaw, a rather stately personage of more than twelve years standing in

her lady's service, as she asks Miss Darrell what dress should be left out for the morrow's journey. Is there no irony in her respect? no deceit, or jealousy in her attentions? That lady on the couch, is it not the stranger of Cowford, though something changed by time? That young bright creature, with her dark hazel eyes, that say such loving, and such lovely things when turned on Mrs. Arnold, the expression of her features changing with her changeful thoughts;—is not that Kate Darrell? Little Kate?—the child of crazy Nan? It is!—the veriest dullard need not ask again has Mrs. Arnold kept her wise resolve. Let those condemn who have broken no resolves themselves! Are you curious, and would know how these things came to pass? There is little variety in the history of broken resolutions:—the hearts of all could tell the tale. We intend to be firm:—we do not change all at once:—we think, and we debate:—we yield inch by inch:—we s

our danger:—we hesitate:—but we have gone too far to retreat:—pride, vanity, and other foes are leagued against us,—we are conquered!

Mrs. Arnold was one of the most gentle, amiable, and unselfish of women; but she was deficient in energy, and resolution; when she acted decidedly, which she occasionally did, it was from some generous impulse, not from the command of reason:—it is but rarely that we see firmness and gentleness united. An only child, and left an orphan early, all her best affections were centered in her husband, and her Mary. The delicate health of herself, and Mr. Arnold, induced them to live a life of seclusion; so that when death deprived her of husband and child, she felt more desolate than she would otherwise have done. Her residence in Italy for the sake of the climate, at a time when a residence abroad was by no means as common as now, together with her previous retired life had in a great

measure estranged her from the friends of her youth: whilst the melancholy, and increased delicacy of frame, succeeding her loss, kept those aloof, who, from former recollections, esteem for her virtues, or a knowledge of her wealth without an acknowledged heir, might have induced to offer their services to dispel her grief. Resisting all endeavours to draw her into society, alleging that she had neither health nor spirits for the exertion, even her existence was nearly forgotten beyond the immediate neighbourhood of Beechem Cliff, where she resided; rarely, very rarely, making short excursions to try the effect of change of air and scene. Mr. Arnold's only near relation being a nephew, sent to India at an early age to wean him from evil company, and evil ways, he left the whole of his handsome property without restriction to his widow, considering young Millar to be already sufficiently provided for, judging by his worth.

Beechen Cliff was endeared to Mrs. Arnold, not so much from its beauty, as from its having been the birth-place of her husband—the scene of the happiness of their first married years:—and, still doting on his memory, she was rejoiced when young Millar returned from the East with a fair character, and a pleasing wife. Soon after the adoption of little Kate, they visited the widow, by invitation, and returned to India at the expiration of his leave of absence, loaded with presents, and in the hope, though not expressed, of being eventually her heirs. This could only be conjecture, for though Mrs. Arnold was known to have made her will during Mr. Millar's residence in England, so well did she and her solicitor keep their own councils, that nothing certain could be asserted on the point. The Millars were again expected in England; and Mrs. Arnold expressed pleasure at the prospect of their meeting.

It had been the intention of her protectress

to spare Nan Darrell's child the misery attending an education superior to the pupil's natural station in society; and really little Kate herself must bear the blame if things chanced otherwise. She was so sweet tempered, so docile, so endearing; so quick to learn, so grateful to her teacher; and withal possessing a gaiety so inspiriting, and so bewitching, that every body liked to teach, play with, and caress her; and she liked to be taught, played with, and caressed by every body, from the footman, who fed her guinea-pigs; the gardener, who made her a tiny garden, all for herself; the keeper, who brought her young birds and hares to nurse and tame; the housekeeper, who instructed her in the mysteries of pastry and preserves; the stately Mrs. Shaw, who lectured her on morals, and the use of the needle; the coachman, who taught her to ride;—from every body, up to dear, dear Mamma Arnold herself, who, having no one beside her whom

she could hope to induce to take an interest in her favorite authors and pursuits, was at last startled by the conviction, forced upon her, that unconsciously, and unintentionally, she had obeyed mad Nan's injunctions, and formed the child a lady like herself, with all the grace, the knowledge, and accomplishments of a refined, well educated woman. Startled at this conviction she paused to consider:—it was too late for debate, the point was decided—the evil completed. She had allowed the natural fascinations of the child, increased by her daily increasing intelligence, and devoted love to her benefactress, to win so completely on her affection, that she was never so happy as when she was near; always felt some wish ungratified when she was absent. She watched her graceful movements, —she listened to her remarks—she saw her taste for the beautiful and the refined, a taste she had herself inspired;—and she felt that to condemn her now to the drudgery of servi-

tude—a communion with those so opposed in thoughts and habits—would be a far greater cruelty than she had already committed, in giving her an education superior to her birth.

The tastes which she had inspired she was bound in love and justice to provide her the means of gratifying: it would be the act of a barbarian to condemn her to become a mental Tantalus, ever pining for that beyond her reach. Her love would not have permitted this, had not her justice forbade it:—having gone so far, she must go still farther; and with the feelings, manners, and education of a gentlewoman, give also the means to support the station.

Every obstacle to her wish of saving her adopted child from any future pain, which her plan of education might occasion, seemed overcome by the death of Nan, some time after the removal of little Kate from Cowford, of which Mrs. Binks had given due information to Mrs. Arnold. The body of the poor

crazy creature had been found in the river; the features bruised, and disfigured by the action of a violent flood, but still the identity perfect.

Now then Kate Darrell stood alone;—with no connections of low and vulgar habits to whom duty might compel attentions painful to a refined and delicate mind.

Gradually Kate's happy face peeped less often into the housekeeper's room, the pantry, and the court, though it was still always welcome;—gradually the domestics, though equally attached, ceased to call her little Kate:—it grew to be Miss Kate — Miss Katharine; and, at last, Miss Darrell;—and all this without any order from Mrs. Arnold, or any assumption on her own part, being only the natural effect of her increasing age, and elegance of manner. That no jealousy was felt towards the favorite spoke well for all.

Mrs. Banham, a friend of Mrs. Arnold's

before her marriage, was one of the very few with whom she had kept up any intercourse, an intercourse restricted to occasional letters for the last twelve years, principally owing to Mrs. Banham's having been abroad during the greater part of that period, first from her husband's holding some official situation, and latterly for the purpose of completing the education of her daughters. It was to her house that Mrs. Arnold and her adopted child were to proceed on the following day; the former having at length yielded to her old friend's pressing invitation; but not without many nervous misgivings. However she might of late have overlooked any pain that could accrue to her young favorite from her lowly birth, now that her protegée was to mingle for the first time with persons of her own tastes, and manners, though her superiors in station, she could not but feel a little anxious, loving Kate as she did, lest she should suffer annoyances and embarrassments

from which all her care would be unable to preserve her: nay, naturally elegant as was her demeanour in general, for all about Kate Darrell was natural and elegant, she felt something like a dread of her first appearance in society, lest, unaccustomed to strangers, she should exhibit the awkwardness which might be expected from her descent. Another embarrassing consideration was, that for once in her life, she had shown a want of candour to her friend. If she had told the truth, she had not told the whole truth:—she had simply spoken of her favorite as an orphan whom she had adopted, and to whom she was much attached. Her former knowledge of the world suggested this concealment; but she could not quite reconcile herself to what she considered as little short of deception; and she felt some dread lest the whole truth should be revealed through the tattling of her servants, or the openness of Kate herself, who, knowing nothing of that world she

dreaded, never dreamt of concealing hope, feeling, thought, or circumstance, unless particularly requested to do the latter, for little Kate could keep a secret, half girl, half woman, as she was. A woman in her intellect, and its development;—a child, a loving and confiding child in her affections, and sometimes in her manner.

From her first fear she was relieved by the rather formal, but worthy lady's maid, who, after a due quantity of bridling, and an undue quantity of preface, gave her mistress to understand that she, and the housekeeper, and the footman, or more properly the butler, to say nothing of the coachman, the cook, and the scullion, had decided it would be as well now that Miss Darrell was grown up, and her mother dead, not to mention what sort of a person that dead mother had been. "It might prevent some young gentlemen from coming forward;—and Miss Darrell would be a blessing to any one."

Mrs. Arnold coloured whilst she applauded the kind decision of Mrs. Shaw and her friends, adding, however, that should the question arise of Miss Darrell's marriage, she should consider it a duty to mention every particular. It now only remained to give a hint for silence to her protegée, grounding that hint upon some generous motive, not to sully her young mind with the shadow of deception: or, to use the words of Mrs. Shaw, 'the dread of deterring some young gentlemen from coming forward.'

"Where has my little Kate been roaming?" asked Mrs. Arnold of the lovely creature kneeling at her feet, putting back the curls that nearly hid her glowing cheek, that cheek no longer showing the sun burnt hue of early days, but clear, and life like; and if not boasting the dazzling fairness of a blonde, possessing the still greater charm of

"Changing with each changing thought."

"Where have I been, dear mamma? where should I have been, but all round and about, and here, and there, and everywhere? Did you think I was gone too long?"

"You wish me to say yes, but I will not flatter you. Where is your here, and there, and every where?" replied Mrs. Arnold looking with delight at her gentle gaiety, that in its greatest exuberance was never overpowering.

"Oh, mamma! I thought only little girls were curious. I suppose I must tell you though, or dear, kind, lecturing Shaw will put me in the corner. Well then!—I went down to the school, and Goody Harman's, and Goody Blanchard's, and ever so many other Goodies, just to say good bye, and hope they would all be well, they, and their children, and grandchildren when we came back."

"Pretty well all the village I suspect you visited, Kate."

"How clever you are, mamma! And can you guess all the kind and grateful things they said of you too? But you cannot. I love them all, for they love you, nearly,—no—not quite nearly, as much as I love you!" said the grateful girl throwing her arms round the neck of her benefactress.

"Go on with your confession, you little flatterer; and never mind what the Goodies said, or I shall really put you in the corner," said Mrs. Arnold, gently putting down the encircling arms.

"I first went to the top of the hill, and it was all so beautiful around;—the sun setting in such splendour—the air so fragrant, so refreshing, that I was sorry we were going away to-morrow. Will Sallowfield be half as pretty?"

"Simple child! you cannot love—you idolize. There are a thousand homes more beautiful than Beechen Cliff—millions more worthy love than Mrs. Arnold."

"No! No! No!" said little Kate with loving warmth.

"Take heed that you do not love the things of earth too much: they may be taken from you; and then that earth will seem but as a desert."

"But you—how can I love you too much? You, to whom I owe all, every thing?" exclaimed the grateful girl, unwilling to be stinted in her love.

"You rate my care too highly, Kate; there has been selfishness in my affection. My heart was desolate; and you have made it bloom again. I had no tie to earth—and you have bound me to this life again with chains of love; you have been to me as a dear child."

"Thank you! thank you! my own dear mother, these are the sweetest words I ever heard;—they will be with me till my dying day. I feared I had been wayward, and had not loved you as I should."

"Not loved me as you should? Why you have always touched upon idolatry — but you must be more sober in your speech, dear Kate now that you will have other hearers."

"No! No! I would have all the world know what I owe you."

"But I do not desire this; and I am sure you would not pain;—yes pain me, Kate. I am in earnest. If you really love me, you will only say you were an orphan; and that I took you to my home and heart."

"If I love you? Can you doubt it? I thought you said I had been to you as a dear child."

"I did; and it is on that love I reckon for compliance with my wishes; my child will never speak, when I request her to be silent;" replied Mrs. Arnold kissing away the tears of the grateful Kate.

"I will be silent—quite silent—if you wish it; but I so love to tell——"

"Just what I wish untold; you make me play the baby like yourself, and look as much a simpleton. It would be better to be silent at all times in delicacy to your mother, whom of course you cannot recollect.

"I think I recollect an odd looking little person with eyes so bright they frightened me; but I am sure I remember dear Granny Wheeler to whom you were so kind until her death, and all for me."

"That is enough, Kate; no more praise but heed my wish;—and now tell me more of your long ramble. I would wager this diamond ring that you had a look at all your untalking pets, and a confab with your talking ones. A long gossip with the keeper, and the gardener, I doubt not."

"Yes, yes; you knew there was no risk in wagering your ring, for they do love a long

talk, and could not let me go without one. They say it will be so dull and unked, when we are gone; and we shall not be as happy anywhere else; and the gardener tells me I shall lose the blowing of the prettiest flowers, and he has got some new ones just to please me—and I so love all flowers!"

"I know you do Kate, next to me. So now you are sorry that you are going; you who sometimes wish to traverse earth and sea."

"Not exactly sorry, only not quite so glad:—I fear my pets will miss me."

"Again, Kate, I give you warning—your love approaches to idolatry!"

"No not idolatry. I must love those who love me; and all love little Kate," said the graceful girl, throwing her arms round Mrs. Arnold, and stopping all reply with kisses.

"And yet the time may come when all that

charms you now may cease to please; and still the change be not with them, but you."

"Mamma! Impossible!"

CHAPTER III.

I saw her ere regret had thrown
Its shadow o'er her lightness;
As yet her heart no grief had known,
Her spirit liv'd in brightness.
Her sweet smile held all minds in thrall,
Her greatest spell was ever,
That heart was in, and over all—
She could be worldling never.

We will not give an account of the journey, nor of little Kate's wonder and delight, the wonder and delight of an intelligent, animated girl of seventeen, leaving her home for the first time, and blessed with that happy disposition which in all things,

"Finds, or makes a pleasure."

We passed over ten years without giving

even one hint on education;—we will now pass over three days without lecturing on scenery. We were ever merciful.

On the fourth day Mrs. Arnold and her young favorite entered Mrs. Banham's dressing room, who gave them a friendly welcome, words, and manner so empressé, (I really cannot remember any English word which will convey my meaning;) that Katharine yielded her heart at once; and Mrs. Arnold blushed at her nervous fears, lest the friend of her childhood should have grown cold, and worldly. The two young ladies fine stylish looking girls, rather older than they desired to be thought, had much of their mother's manner; but some might think they could discover in the eldest traces of study and design; whilst a suspicion might arise that the youngest in her desire to attract, would scarcely scruple to enact the coquette. Mr. Banham was a prudent man of middling intellect, silent from principle, still more than inclination; always

afraid of saying, or doing too much. Mr. George Banham was rather a genteel looking youth, who having no character of his own, was inclined to borrow one from those lauded by others, that is as much as was in his power; changing his models with the public voice. His definition of character was dress, and address.

Mrs. Banham was universally liked—Mr. Banham universally respected—the young ladies pronounced clever, stylish, amiable, and accomplished, a verdict not to be set aside by the murmurs of some poor rejected suitors; to whom it would have been cruel to deny the right of complaint. The house was very pleasant; every thing well appointed; and generally, as at present, filled with visitors, to Mrs. Arnold's annoyance, who had expected to meet only a family circle.

General introductions not being the fashion we will leave the temporary inhabitants of Sallowfield to introduce themselves as they

take part in conversation, with only an occasional word or two of explanation.

The young ladies carried off Miss Darrell for a walk in which they were joined by other beaux, and belles, whilst Mrs. Banham and her visitor passed the remainder of the morning in talking over olden times.

Mrs. Arnold's scarcely admitted fears that her favorite, unused to society, would exhibit awkwardness, and embarrassment on her first mingling with strangers were dispelled before the close of the day. No hope of attracting admiration had ever been held out to her as an inducement to pursue any particular line of conduct; but all her actions flowed from the prompting of a gay and kindly heart; thus she was always natural—always the same; aping no manner—descending to no deceit. She met every kindness with gratitude, as being above her merits; looked on all things through the medium of her own happiness, never dreaming of envy, or ill will; still less

suspecting the admiration that her grace, her animation, and her sunny temper was compelling, even from those the least inclined to entertain the feeling.

Another misgiving too of Mrs. Arnold's was happily allayed. Now that little Kate, as she still sometimes called her, was to come in contact with the conventional quietude of good society, she could not but fear that her favorite's naive, confiding, and caressing manner, so enchanting in seclusion, so attaching to those towards whom it was displayed, would be startling, nay almost ridiculous, in the eyes of those in whom a commerce with mankind had enforced a more cautious, and sober demeanour. Great therefore, was her delight in seeing that whilst towards herself little Kate retained her childlike, and caressing manner, an instinctive feeling of propriety, taught her to exhibit towards others a more staid, and womanly conduct. Her gaiety was gentle, never boisterous, or over-

powering; and respect mingled with the admiration excited by her fascinating playfulness. Romp, flirt, or coquette, she was not—it was impossible to believe that she ever could be; but the most natural, grateful, warm-hearted, and attaching of human beings, with the errors of humanity not as yet developed by acts, from the absence of temptation.

"What a lovely creature, Miss Darrell is!" remarked Mrs. Banham to her old friend: "I wonder you have been allowed to retain her so entirely. Has she no relations anxious to claim such a treasure?"

"No near relations: her parents have been dead some years; and she was an only child," replied Mrs. Arnold with some slight embarrassment, at concealing the whole truth, though still more confirmed in her intention of silence towards the world in general, by a late conversation on the subject of low birth.

Mrs. Banham marked the embarrassment; but did not interpret it correctly.

"Poor child! yet I should not say so, when you have been so kind a mother to her."

"I have endeavoured to supply a parent's place; and love her as a child," replied Mrs. Arnold, without the slightest idea of Mrs. Banham's suspicions.

"Very kind—like yourself, Eliza: you at least are unchanged by time. For myself, I think there is too much said about birth, when a girl has elegant manners, a refined mind, and no vulgar relations to annoy her. The only thing is, delicate tastes, and expensive habits, require the means of gratifying them. I have seen much misery brought on a poor girl where this has not been thought of; it is like taming a bird; accustoming it to an abundance of dainty food which it cannot procure for itself; and then turning it out to

pine, and starve amid the mocking of its fellows."

"Kate shall be well provided for," remarked Mrs. Arnold with emotion, turning pale at the thought of such a fate for her darling.

"I am not jealous for my daughters," continued Mrs. Banham; "they are no great beauties, and must take their chance of pleasing: but if I were I should be tempted to wish your adopted child with the hosts of evil spirits at the bottom of the Red Sea. How all the gentlemen are collected round her! As for George, his heart is gone already, though considered rather fastidious. Must I warn him that Miss Darrell has no heart to give, or may he woo and wear if he can win?"

"Kate has no engagement, and shall decide for herself; but she is full young to think of these things, and you must not put such fancies into her head. She is half a girl still and has scarcely seen more men than the gentle Miranda."

"Never fear! I will not put such fancies into her head; but what George may do, since he has your permission, I really cannot say. Young men do not mind their mothers now as they used to do in our earlier days; besides, I hold with you, that there should be no interference in these matters and detest manœuvering. It would be a fresh tie between us;—yet there is no need of this I hope, Eliza."

"None! None! Sophia," said Mrs. Arnold touched by her friend's appeal.

Mr. George Banham was, as his mother had hinted, making les doux yeux at the animated Katharine, who with Miss Banham formed the centre of a circle of admiring gentlemen, moved to this endeavour to make himself agreeable, by the example of Sir Herbert Eustace, a lively young Baronet with an unincumbered estate in the neighbourhood, of ten thousand a year, who fascinated by the witchery of her manner, had scarcely left her

side since her first arrival. So perfectly unembarrassed by, because so perfectly unconscious of, this admiration, was Kate Darrell, that she smiled and answered, now gaily, and now gravely, with ever changing expression, just as naturally as she would have answered the old gardener, exciting by her self possession the wonder of those who knew the seclusion in which she had been reared.

"Positively it shall be so, Miss Darrell," exclaimed the lively Baronet, who having sometime been the cynosure of all the manœuvering elders in the neighbourhood, was never troubled with mauvaise honte, aware that what he said or did, was sure of meeting approbation. "Positively, Miss Darrell, you must ride over to Eustace Park to-morrow, lest I should be suddenly summoned to the North, as I expect. You shall see wonders, upon wonders; your own wonder the greatest marvel of the whole. I have not met with so delightful a person as yourself, since my intro-

duction to Punch, which I always count an epoch in my life; my acquaintance with you I consider epoch the second. I pique myself on my penetration, and am thoroughly convinced that you will be the very princess of sight seers; beholding all that you ought to behold; believing all that you ought to believe."

"Even to the very stone griffin, that spreads his wings when you appear; and the knight and his lady-love who descend from their pictures to dance a galliard in the hall at the full of the moon, as you have so kindly informed me?" replied the laughing Katharine. "I own my simplicity, Sir Herbert, and my wish to oblige you in return for all the pretty tales that you have been telling me, but I am afraid I shall not see and believe all you desire."

"You think not? Well, we are at issue then; for I am thoroughly convinced you will; you wonder more naturally and beautifully

than any one I know. I would I were some strange monster to be the object of your wonderment."

"Is it absolutely requisite that you should be so changed to make me wonder at you?" asked Katharine archly, yet so sweetly that he could not be offended.

"What!—you have wondered at me as I am? I thought as much:—you have wondered at my eloquence, whilst relating the honors of my family; and I am repaid. It is not every one who can relate—it requires some genius; but then, neither is it every one who can or will open such eyes, with such a very bewitching mingling of doubt, marvel and belief. You will always be a unique, Miss Darrell."

"Few ladies would thank you for such a prediction," growled out Mr. Bell, an old bachelor, and universal satirist, and grumbler.

"So you are there, Sir; come to quarrel with all my pretty sayings to my face;—and repeat them as your own behind my back.

Forbid it gallantry that I should not submit to the vagaries of a belle. But once more, Miss Darrell when are we to start? to-morrow? Go you must."

"Indeed, Sir Herbert, I cannot go to-morrow."

"Indeed, Miss Darrell, you must. Remember,

"Un plaisir differé est un plaisir perdu."

You still look thwartingly. Now am I thoroughly convinced that a phrenologist would report your organs to be marvellously inharmonious. He would prove beyond the power of combativeness to dispute, that with you firmness had degenerated into obstinacy; whilst wonder had become incredibly large and active from the habit of marvelling at your perfectly unfeminine desire of having your own way."

"No: it has grown so large, on the instant, wondering at your rudeness. First you com-

pare me to Punch, at whom I believe every one laughs: then to a creature unlike any of its kind—a before unheard of monster—one who wishes for her own way;—and now you are accusing me of obstinacy, and lecturing on phrenology, when I heard you say not many hours since, that you never talked learnedly but to those whom you disliked or despised. I am shocked; and shall go to dear Mrs. Arnold for protection before you compare me to any thing still more horrid."

"Then I follow to make my defence."

"I disdain to complain, leaving you rather to the punishment of your accusing conscience."

"What is all this about punishment, and accusing conscience?" enquired Mrs. Arnold, as Katharine approached, followed by Sir Herbert, neither looking inclined to inflict punishment, nor dreading its infliction.

"Many and heavy charges against your daughter, Mrs. Arnold, demure and innocent,

as she is endeavouring to appear," replied the Baronet, "She disbelieves all the wonders that I have told her of Eustace Park, yet obstinately—I use the word advisedly—yet obstinately, refuses to judge for herself. I, who also discover strong symptoms of waywardness, and that rarest of all errors the desire of having her own way;—strongly advise you on the score of morality, and good government alone to insist on her riding over to Eustace Park to-morrow."

"What say you Kate in your defence?" asked Mrs. Arnold with a smile, not to be refused to the Baronet's good-natured gaiety.

"My dear Mrs. Arnold, do not think of hearing Miss Darrell in her defence. I know of no custom so greatly tending to the spread of immorality, as allowing an accused person to defend himself. In this most perfect world—among men, that world's most perfect work; whom interest never sways, whom passion never rules—who would undertake the

office of accuser but with the deepest regret; and from the most conscientious motives? Of course therefore the accuser may ever be relied on; whilst to listen to the accused is to tempt one, who has already erred, to err again, and say the thing which is not, in the hope of escaping punishment. Never hear more than one side of the question, if you would not be puzzled how to decide."

"Your eloquence would be convincing to one less prejudiced, and attached to the old fashioned ways of my fathers; but the mighty schoolmaster has not yet visited my remote abode, so you must let me proceed in the old humdrum way; therefore, Kate, for your defence. Are you obstinate?"

"I hope not, mamma."

"Then why will you not go to Eustace Park to-morrow, as Sir Herbert wishes? He at least, has no inordinate desire to have his own way—no man ever erred on that point—it is a feminine failing only."

"Ah, Mrs. Arnold! you have too much esprit de corps, to prove an impartial judge; but I shall not submit to be nonsuited without a struggle."

"No; you would traverse the world for a butterfly, yet not stoop to pick up the pearl at your feet: wasting your talents in a lady's drawing-room,—saying nothings to win the applause of fools, when you should be pleading in the cause of justice at the bar," remarked Mr. Bell.

"A bar to your further interruptions!" replied the Baronet, a touch of pettishness mingling with his gaiety.

Did he feel there was truth in the cynic's remark? There are some people who gain impunity for rudeness from perseverance, and such was the case with Mr. Bell: no one seriously quarrelled with him for his remarks; and he quarrelled with none for their replies.

"Come, Miss Darrell, you have not answer-

ed Mrs. Arnold's question. Why will you not go with me to Eustace Park to-morrow, when I have engaged to show you griffins who speak—women who are silent and puppies with two tails?"

"Six, at the very least, Sir Herbert!" interrupted Katharine archly." Such wondrous stories of animal sagacity, I never heard before; and suspect I never shall again. The Hippogriffe of Italian romance—the dog of old Mother Hubbard, are as nothing to the animals of flesh and stone at Eustace Park."

"Fie, Miss Darrell! I am shocked at your exaggeration, to give it no harsher term. I only engaged to show you puppies with two tails; and neither heads nor hearts. I am a strict observer of truth, even to the most minute particular. A good story may please the unscrupulous, whose notions of morality are not very exalted; for my part, I only admire a plain downright fact without any embellishment. If I heard a child of lesser,

or larger growth, assert that he had broken the near leg of a fly in the right hand side of a bay window, and knew that it had been the off leg of a fly, and had taken place in the left hand side of the window, I should make a point of correcting him, as Dr. Johnson says. Indeed, I perfectly agree with my highly respected friend Mr. Bampton, who, unlike most, acts up to his opinion, that it is most unjustifiable, and unwarrantable, to tell a good story."

The shout of laughter which succeeded the Baronet's mock defence of plain matter of fact drowned the reply of the annoyed Mr. Bampton, of which only the first few words were audible.

"Really, Sir Herbert Eustace, this conduct is most unwarrantable, unjustifiable and, —"

"I perfectly agree with you," continued the incorrigible Baronet, "the telling a good story is unwarrantable and unjustifiable; and I know none more deserving of praise for

their consistency than you, who not only set your face against it in others, but never fall into the error yourself. What if a man be a little prosy and digressive, better that, than embellish nature with a touch of art."

"Upon my word, Sir Herbert, I must be permitted to say that this conduct is most unwarrantable."

"Just so, Sir; I knew you agreed with me," again interrupted his provoking tormentor. "It is quite unwarrantable and unjustifiable that the lips should be employed in a prosy discussion, when the heart might rejoice in the beauty of poetry;—your expressions are inimitable! As you say, this turning away from the original subject is most discreditable, so answer to the plain question, Miss Darrell—why will you not go to Eustace Park to-morrow? Are you afraid of the dogs, the griffins, the grim portraits of my ancestors, or their living representative? For the last, I assure you, I am the most quiet, harmless,

truth telling being in existence. Mr. Bampton will vouch for this. See—he is preparing to pronounce my eulogium: but my modesty will not permit me to allow its utterance, so speak at once Miss Darrell—are you afraid of me?"

"Not in the least! you are so very quiet and harmless," replied the laughing Katharine.

"Then why will you not go? If you think the ride too long I will drive you and Miss Banham in my phæton."

"You are very kind, but I would rather not go to-morrow," said Katharine a little embarrassed.

"But why not? Never acting without a good reason myself, I always require the same of another."

"Have you studied Mason on Self Knowledge?" growled out Mr. Bell.

"No, Sir; but I will when you vouch from personal experience of the profit which may

accrue from its perusal. Come Miss Darrell, the reason."

Katharine coloured and hesitated.

"Do not tease the dear child," interposed Miss Banham, depend upon it she has good reasons: she is a person to increase a favor by previous denial."

"I agree with you, Miss Banham," replied the Baronet rather emphatically! "I do not wish to tease you, Miss Darrell; so if you really would rather not go: and rather not tell the reason why, I will not say another word, though I had set my heart on showing you the wonders of my ancient home."

"Thank you!" said Katharine, really grateful for his forbearance, beginning to suspect that she had become an object of general observation. "I cannot go to-morrow, and would rather not tell the reason now, though I will some other time."

"Right, Miss Darrell! do not by yielding, admit the necessity of our sex assigning

reasons for their actions," observed Miss Banham.

"Nay, Miss Banham; I cannot permit the shadow of such a libel to rest on you.—When did you act without a reason or motive?" remarked the Baronet with seeming politeness.

The lady coloured slightly, but made no reply.

"I suspect I know the secret Kate," said Mrs. Arnold. "You heard Shaw arrange a quiet drive for me to-morrow, and thought with her, that I could not enjoy it in your absence."

The blushing Katharine admitted that she had judged correctly.

Sir Herbert looked more admiringly on her for her self denial, flattering himself that she had anticipated pleasure from the ride which he had proposed, whilst Mr. Bell muttered. "It won't last;" but more in sorrow, than in sarcasm.

"So, Mrs. Arnold, you are the wicked fairy after all, who thwarts my schemes. I will

show my magnanimity by asking you to join the party. The road is excellent; and you shall have a poney carriage, or a donkey for the grounds; or if really not equal to the fatigue we will defer it, and you shall fix your own day; but do let it be as soon as possible, for I may be called away, and I am dying to hear Miss Darrell wonder at, and admire all my treasures."

"Then I fix to-morrow, Sir Herbert, in reward for your magnanimity; but I will not tax your politeness to play civil to an old woman, though thanking you for your kindness. I saw Eustace Park some years ago, and have no doubt that Katharine's wonder and delight will satisfy even your exorbitant expectations. No remonstrance, dear Kate; I wish you to go; and really can take a quiet drive without you to amuse me. But how are you to go?"

"I shall settle all that," replied Sir Herbert; "and see if I cannot have my own

way for once. Depend on me for proper horses, chaperonage, &c. You look doubtful;—only entrust Miss Darrell to my care; and I will engage to guard her with the daring and devotion of a knight of the olden times."

"I think I may trust you;" said Mrs. Arnold.

"Indeed you may," he replied with a touch of feeling.

"Do not be alarmed; George will take care of her;" remarked Mrs. Banham in a low tone; but not too low for the Baronet's quick ear, who fancied he heard an addition concerning his own taste for flirting with every new face.

"What do you think of Sallowfield and its inhabitants?" asked Mrs. Arnold of Katharine as they sat together that night in the former's dressing room.

"Sallowfield is very beautiful; and its inhabitants are very kind."

"Then you do not regret our coming?"

"No: but I shall not love Beechen Cliff the less; and shall return unchanged."

"You seemed friends with the young ladies at once. I have scarcely spoken to them myself; but I hear they are clever, amiable girls."

"I should be ungrateful not to like them, they are so kind; indeed, so is every one."

"Sir Herbert Eustace included?"

"Certainly: he is so considerate, so animated; and only laughs a little at my simplicity."

"And you do not mind his laughter?"

"No, he does it so good-naturedly."

"They call him very handsome," remarked Mrs. Arnold, anxious to learn more of the effect of his attentions, since her warning of his taste for flirting.

"So I heard Miss Charlotte Banham tell him, as I thought rather oddly."

"You are not of the general opinion then?"

"I do not know. I thought at first only of his being so kind and amusing; and now I am afraid, I am very ungrateful, thinking much more of the wonders which he has promised to show me to-morrow, than of himself."

Mrs. Arnold smiled to think how the Baronet's vanity might have been piqued at such a confession had he heard it, and changed the subject, satisfied that her single hearted favorite had borne her first trial of admiration without a feeling of self conceit; or any other thought that might risk her future peace.

"Katharine Darrell is really attractive in spite of her country manners, and country education. Do you not think so Sir Herbert?" said Miss Charlotte Banham, after the object of her remark had retired with Mrs Arnold.

"In my opinion, Miss Darrell is attractive on account of what you call her country manners,

and country education, and not in spite of them. She has the spell of nature full upon her."

"You admiring nature, and country manners! I am amazed! I thought you found fault with Miss White for the very same perfections, but last week."

"The very reason why he should admire them this. You do not expect Sir Herbert Eustace to be two weeks together in the same mind?" growled out Mr. Bell.

"To be sure not, I am for variety; and that is the reason why you and I can never agree. I never knew you pleased with any thing, or any body in my life; you are always the same," replied the Baronet, whom the cynic rarely lost the opportunity of attacking; and who in return, rarely lost an opportunity of retorting.

"If sameness drew to sameness, as does like to like, we should be friends; for if in me is the monotony of grumbling, on you I charge the monotony of trifling. When did wisdom

mingle with, or rule the conduct of Sir Herbert Eustace?"

"Now; when I decline a discussion with a cynic, who would gloom the couleur de rose of life."

"Couleur de rose of life!" muttered Mr. Bell. "Not an English term; and not an English feeling."

"Then all the young ladies desirous of winning the admiration of Sir Herbert Eustace, must enact country maidens, performing rustic courtesies, and rustic simplicity;" remarked Miss Charlotte Banham.

"All who would gain the esteem, and lasting admiration of Sir Herbert Eustace must enact no character at all; but appear what nature made them. In the inartificial, manners take the tone of the mind, whether in town or country; let that be refined, and delicate, the heart warm and kind, and there can be neither awkwardness, vulgarity, nor rudeness."

"Sir Herbert Eustace turned grave lecturer!" observed Miss Banham with her usual harmonious manner. "I agree with you; abruptness, boisterous gaiety, and all other sins against les convenances, prove the absence of that refinement and delicacy of mind, which can alone produce perfect elegance."

"I suspect, Miss Banham, our agreement is scarcely as perfect as you pronounce. You more admire the elegance of art—I the elegance of nature:—you the mere elegance of manner, I rather the elegance of mind; and for les convenances, if you mean the critical frivolities of over refined idlers, I estimate far more highly one trait of kind and generous feeling."

"Where will you find it?" asked Mr. Bell sarcastically. "Yet it is a more sensible speech than most of yours," he added somewhat graciously.

"Hear! Hear! Hear! Mr. Bell absolutely agrees with me! I crown myself with laurel after the fashion of Horace Walpole."

"A selfish, sensible egotist," muttered Mr. Bell.

"There is no difference in our opinions, Sir Herbert I believe; only I am deficient in that clearness of definition, in which you excel," observed Miss Banham with a flattering smile.

"I must feel honored by the harmony in our opinions," replied the Baronet politely; but with a smile that the lady scarcely liked.

"Then you think Miss Darrell's country manner may pass in good society," said Miss Charlotte, who, whatever the world might say of her cleverness, sometimes showed a want of wisdom in pushing a question.

"I think Miss Darrell fitted for the first society; not only the first in rank and fashion,

but also in elegance and talent. Her's is the most fascinating manner I ever met with; fascinating from its being the manner of the heart, not the mere perfection of tuition."

"Indeed! Then I suppose I am in the wrong; and having been accustomed to a certain manner—the manner of the first circles—am apt to judge too critically. I fancied her animation a little trop prononcé—deficient in the harmony of high breeding. Perhaps you admire her features too, I have been defending them against the criticism of the fastidious, who have been pulling them to pieces, one by one."

"I care little for the mere form of feature," replied the Baronet; "but the expression of those features is so varied, so beautiful in every variety, that he must be hypercritical who should say that her nose was too long; or her lip too short. I can think of her only

as a sunbeam, in whose gladdening beauty one would wish to bask life away."

"I agree with Sir Herbert; her nose is not too long, or her lip too short; and she is so delightful!—not two minutes the same," observed Mr. George Banham, whose present fancy was to copy the Baronet.

Sir Herbert glanced at his stupid echo with some idea of retracting his praise, then contented himself with a mischievous smile.

"Now, Sir Herbert, do I feel prouder than I ever did before," said Miss Charlotte. "I once heard you say that you never praised one lady to another, but when you had a very high opinion of her to whom you spoke. I have tried in what estimation you hold me;—and am content."

"I am glad of it," replied the Baronet.

"Why, Eustace, what means this eulogium on Miss Darrell?" asked the friend he joined

at the conclusion of the sentence. "I never heard you so poetical before."

"And probably never will again, unless I should chance to have an equal desire to give pleasure to the Misses Banham. I spoke for their especial gratification."

"I understand. I thought at first that you were going to enact Petruchio to this modern Katharine."

"No, no; I must become steady, before I become a Benedict, which Mr. Bell says will never be; and some of his prophecies of evil must in the common course of events, come true."

"Pray is Miss Darrell to become Mrs. George Banham?" asked Mrs. Bampton who piqued herself on sincerity, and going to work, as she expressed herself, in a straightforward manner; a line of conduct characterised by some as consisting in asking impertinent questions, and making impertinent remarks.

"I have not quite made up my mind yet, though my mother wishes it;" replied the young man conceitedly.

"You had better decide quickly, or the lady's preference for the bloody hand may be too decided to be overcome."

"I am not afraid. Besides, Sir Herbert only flirts."

CHAPTER IV.

" The red leaf far more heavily,
Fell down to autumn earth,
Than her light feet—which seem'd to move
To music and to mirth.
With the light feet of early youth,
What hopes and joys depart !
Ah ! nothing like the heavy step,
Betrays the heavy heart."

L. E. L.

" You have the darkest secret of my heart—
I love him not ! though friends to all beside—to him
A foe !"

The morrow came ! a bright, and sunny morrow—warm, but not too warm ;—all freshness, and all life :—just such a day as Sir Herbert would have chosen, had he possessed any influence with the sun, and been requested by the earth to bespeak a day for its benefit.

"Such a day! Miss Darrell, for seeing all the beautiful monstrosities of Eustace Park. I insist on your bringing back a most marvellous account of the wonders of my paternal home. To horse! To horse! good people; or there will be no time to see half the curiosities," exclaimed the Baronet, hurrying off some of the party to equip. "You seem a little anxious, Mrs. Arnold," he said approaching that lady, who was looking out from the window on some of the horses, leading about below. "You need be under no alarm, I can assure you; Miss Darrell's steed is nearly as gentle as herself; and I really am neither Ogre nor wild man of the woods when young ladies are given to my care, whatever Messrs. Bell and Bampton may assert."

She looked steadily at him, but did not speak.

"If you really have any dread Mrs. Arnold," he continued, misinterpreting her look, "I will change the arrangement: and

Miss Darrell shall go in my phæton: I am a privileged person, not expected to account for my vagaries. Very odd if a young Baronet with ten thousand a year may not have a fancy or so! But indeed you are timid without a cause; trust me, she will come back safe in life and limb."

"I fear neither for life nor limb," replied Mrs. Arnold, touched by a kind consideration which she had scarcely expected from his exuberant spirits and conduct to others; "but—"

"But what, Mrs. Arnold?"

"I will tell you, Sir Herbert, your kindness inducing me to be candid. Kate is young—very young:—knows nothing of the world:—she is an orphan and having taken charge of her I feel peculiarly bound to watch over, and to guard her. I have heard it hinted that Sir Herbert Eustace, like other young men, is inclined to flirt with every new face; and as he is a person whose slightest acts are

marked, I should be sorry that my child's name were linked with his in a flirtation. Excuse, my plainness;—my love for Katharine makes me anxious."

The Baronet looked into the face of the speaker to ascertain the possibility of scheming; but the placid countenance and pleading eye made him ashamed of the suspicion.

"All a libel depend upon it, whoever told you; and I can guess:"—he replied, with a rather fuller colour. "I repeat; I am neither Ogre, nor wild man of the woods; I flirt with none who do not by word or sign invite to the play; and Miss Darrell is not one of these. I thank you for your candour:—it is not misplaced—and my conduct shall be such as the most anxious mother should approve, for I too should be sorry to hear Miss Darrell made the subject of remark. I am wild and thoughtless;—selfish too, I fear; but I have a heart, Mrs. Arnold," respectfully taking her hand, "though few like you, know how to

strike the chords to which it responds. Will you trust me?"

"I will—I do," she replied touched by his earnestness.

"Thank you. Miss Darrell shall be my care; and I will do my devoir gallantly."

And he did do his devoir gallantly: for though he rode by Katharine's side, pointing out the beauties of the scenery, for which purpose he had preferred the bridle road, his manner was so decidedly respectful, so kind and attentive; and yet so far removed from any endeavour to draw her into what the most fastidious could denominate a flirtation;—in short, so totally different from what it was to those young ladies who sought to attract his attention, that all felt the distinction; and were checked in the remarks which they would otherwise have made on his being so constantly beside her. Another circumstance which preserved Katharine from unpleasant remark was that the Baronet never sought a

tête-à-tête, never addressed to her those apparently confidential observations, which might induce any to believe that he objected to the whole world hearing what he said, in fine, he was acquitted by those who considered themselves competent to decide of enacting the flirt, or the lover.

He looks upon her only as an interesting girl, decided most: and this too after the acquaintance had been continued many days.

"You have been perfection hitherto, Miss Darrell; seen all you should see, admired all you should admire; but now comes the grand trial for there is Eustace Park: and I intend to be very fastidious as to your praise," said the Baronet, as the fine old house rose into view before them, standing on a slight eminence, and backed by lofty woods. "Will you admire now as I could wish?"

"Yes: were it only for your kindness. All are so kind to little Kate," she said, her bright eyes glistening as she spoke.

"It is quite a luxury to be kind to you;—you are so grateful."

The Baronet spoke with feeling, rather than compliment; whilst the Misses Banham looked a little self conscious; and Mr. Bell growled out "Poor child! it will not last."

The house really was a fine old mansion, such as the most common place must have liked; and the more enthusiastic might have doted on. The place was well kept up; and the grounds which were of considerable extent and beauty, showed taste in their first arrangement, and care in their subsequent order.

Katharine was delighted, and delighted others with the open warmth of her admiration. In spite of the incumbrance of a habit, she flitted about with the wild grace of childhood; or as the old gardener said, (there were many old servants at Eustace Park;) "just like a young bird, hovering over one flower,

then over another; its little wings quivering with joy."

"There Miss Darrell! do you hear? The gardener says you are like a young bird."

"A chattering, mischievous little tom-tit, is that it, Sir Herbert? And will he shoot me if I pick this strawberry? It is such a fine one; and dear mamma is so very fond of strawberries."

"Shoot you Miss? Lord love ye, no. I would not hurt you for anything—you look so pretty; and so happy, skipping about from one bed to the other, and praising all the flowers, as thof you loved them; not like some ladies that walks about grave and stiff, as if it warn't fit for ladies to laugh, or admire nothing, but ladies like themselves. It does one's heart good to look at ye, and hear ye laugh: it sounds so sweet, and so happy; just like the birds on a summer day. I'll pick you a beautiful nosegay as Sir Herbert bade

me, for you deserves flowers; and looks prettier than any here."

"There, Miss Darrell! heard you ever the like? You bewitch all who see you," observed the laughing Baronet. "I never heard Sanderson so eloquent before; and you must be a prodigious favorite, for he is cutting you all the best flowers in the garden: yet he sometimes grumbles if I pick only one."

"Not if you keeps it yourself, Sir Herbert; but Ido grudge to see you pick the pretty roses, that knows no deceit, to give them to fine ladies who don't care a bit for the flowers only because you are a rich, handsome bachelor. This young Miss ain't one of them; she likes the flowers for themselves; and I really do think the roses looks prettier when she goes anigh'st them."

"There can be no doubt of that," replied the highly amused Baronet, with whom the old gardener was a privileged person. But

you must not libel the other ladies to do honor to Miss Darrell."

"I says no more than the truth, Sir; and you knows that as well as I do. Never you marry one as is ashamed to laugh and cry, as God meant she should. Your good father, bless his noble heart! used to tell me to take care of you when you was a little fellow; and a right mischievous little chap you was; and so I warns you now, don't you go for to give me a mistress that crawls along like a beetle over a gravel path; or a peacock spreading out its tail to be looked at:—it would break my heart—and it would break your's too," said the old man earnestly. "But there you sees more nor people thinks;" with a sly wink at his young master.

"I see charms in all the sex, though I thank you for your advice," replied the Baronet gaily. "Time enough to consider: I am too wild to think of matrimony for some years to come."

"To be sure you be quite like a boy still sometimes; but it is a noble heart you have; and your lady will be a happy woman be she who she may. A good master, makes a good husband;—and a good master you have been to all," drawing his sleeve across his eyes as he spoke, whilst the Baronet bent for a moment over a flower, and then set off down a green alley, calling on the ladies to follow him to the grotto.

Sir Herbert had indeed ever been a kind master; and his gaiety, good temper, and generous disposition, had endeared him to all his dependants.

"A kind master!" growled out Mr. Bell, "ay, so he may be: he has enough to give—he likes to be happy himself, and see others happy:—it is his nature:—but there is no self-denial in this:—it is only a more refined and generous selfishness. The world does not know what it lauds."

If Katharine's delight had enchanted the

gardener, it did not the less win the old housekeeper, on whom the Baronet called to do the honors of the house, aware that she would be still more pleased than himself in listening to the raptures of the happy girl.

"Come, Mrs. Hilton, you must assist me in showing the house and its wonders to this young lady; she deserves the honor, for she admires Eustace Park as you and I do; I always forget the stories about the old pictures and the armour."

"La, Sir Herbert! you make new ones every day: and I stare and wonder what is true, and what is not; you look so grave all the time."

"Fie, Mrs. Hilton! to hint at my saying what is not."

"I am so glad that other people are puzzled," observed the laughing Katharine; "I thought it was only I who was so simple. I will believe nothing but what you say is true, Mrs. Hilton."

"You are very good, ma'am; but Sir Herbert would not really tell a falsehood for the world; or say anything to hurt any one: it is only his funning."

"Death to some, while sport to him!" growled Mr. Bell, who, as though to annoy the Baronet, persisting in keeping beside him.

"That is, Mrs. Hilton, you mean to say that I am a piece of perfection, though I used to bewilder you sometimes with my strange tales, and make sad havoc among the cakes and sweetmeats. Of the former penchant I am completely cured as all may hear; but the latter remains in full force, as I proved by the destruction committed on the magnificent luncheon you provided, though at so short a notice."

"I did my best, Sir Herbert."

"You did well:—it was perfect in my eyes;" said the Baronet kindly. "I hope

you have the same tastes as myself, Miss Darrell?"

"For what, Sir Herbert? For telling strange tales? or for making sad havoc among the cakes and sweetmeats?" asked Katharine, archly.

"Oh, for the latter only. Have you not had assurance that I no longer practice the former?"

"Then our tastes are alike. For cakes and sweetmeats, I am little Kate still, as I have just given proof: indeed I am afraid I am little Kate still in other things. Let me be the child for the rest of the morning, and you shall see how well I will play the woman in the evening."

"Do not get rid of this happy, child-like simplicity, and gaiety; you would resemble other people then; now you are the most bewitching little bird, as the old gardener says, that eyes ever rested on. Womanhood

will come quite soon enough with its cares and its fears, and its dignities."

"Quite soon enough! too soon!" remarked Mr. Bell, but in a tone so much softer than usual, that the Baronet turned quickly, looking at him in surprise.

"There! even the sober, the far seeing Mr. Bell, confirms my warning; so come with me, and play the child among the monsters of the olden time, as you declare you have among the sweets, of which however I saw no symptoms. My other guests having seen the wonders, prefer almonds, to armour; pastry to pictures; and promise to pardon my devoting myself to your amusement: so come with me, for our space is brief."

Katharine gladly followed, and, to her surprise, Mr. Bell did the like. Sir Herbert would willingly have dispensed with his presence; but was too polite to say so, and really Mr. Bell enacted the cynic in a much more amiable style than was his wont. Perhaps,

though he might not have allowed it, Katharine's gaiety had won upon him, impracticable as he was deemed; certainly the lively girl appeared to regard him kindly; and not to stand in such awe of him as others did. Cynic and grumbler as he was, could he too feel a pleasure in her innocent sportiveness? Who could meet her eyes gleaming with delight,—mark her bounding step—listen to her silver tones, as she gave words to her raptures,—and not be moved? There was such force, such freshness, such an outpouring of her own happy nature in her delight. How could any look on her, and believe that she could become the prey of sorrow or of evil? She knew no grief, no care:—loved all she looked on—believed that all loved her. Her happiness was in its spring:—a rich, and beautiful spring;—not even one blighted leaf to tell of the future winter of the mind. The fuller glow of summer might succeed; but an autumn, and a winter, that heart could never

know:—its beautiful gratitude, its unselfish love, could know no fading, and no blighting.

Alas! the storm, and the canker-worm prey on the beautiful, as on the loathsome; and its loveliest tints will fade by time alone, even without the aid of tempest or of worm.

Yet there are some, whose hearts can know no winter: who even at the frosty time of three score years and ten can feel and love, as in their youth. What are the treasures of the world to the rich affection of such a heart?

Katharine's almost rapturous delight at the lofty corridors, the old armour, the waving banners, and the family portraits, each with its old legend, was expressed so warmly, and so naively, that few heard her without involuntarily sharing in her feeling for the instant, though the next they might be smiling at her

and at themselves. In her, wonder and admiration were in their full power; their edge had not been dulled by satiety.

Certainly the legends were the most amusing ever told by mortal lips; some heroic, some comic, as related by the Baronet, to the scandal of poor Mrs. Hilton, whose affection for her young master could not prevent an occasional shake of the head, and hinted doubt of their veracity.

"And whose portrait is that?" asked the animated sight seer, standing before one more modern than any which she had yet remarked, hanging in a good light in the Baronet's own study. "And do tell me only the truth, if you please, as I am much taken with its noble expression."

"I will not quarrel with your request, though on this occasion it was needless. That is the portrait of my father—I cannot jest on him."

Katharine looked at it for a few moments without further question: and then passed on to the next.

"And whose is this? the same in feature, but different in expression."

"That is my uncle;—my father's elder brother, who, with singular good-nature, having made himself unpopular, departed for the East, where he was killed in a quarrel with a native, though his death is not quite as well authenticated as would have been the case had he died in England, and been honored with a Coroner's Inquest. However the point was too well ascertained before my grandfather's death for me even in my dreams to tremble at his return, which would be by no means agreeable, he not being the most amiable person in the world, or holding much affection towards my noble father who was his antipodes. Unless age should have changed him, and he would now be nearly seventy, I might expect no favor at his hands; and I

have no particular fancy to give up wealth and title. A rich young Baronet has a tolerable time of it; besides I really love the fine old place with its beauties, and vagaries, the latter even hallowed in my eyes, however I may occasionally shock Mrs. Hilton by inventing new stories, instead of relating old ones. With all due respect for my uncle John, I do not desire his presence at Eustace Park."

"I wish he would come; it might be the saving of you!" observed Mr. Bell, abruptly.

"I thank you for your good wishes, which I duly appreciate;" replied the Baronet bowing low.

"You neither thank me for my good wishes, nor appreciate them;" said Mr. Bell with bitterness. "You think me a discontented, querulous old grumbler; but I repeat, I would that your uncle could return, and strip you of your wealth and title; you might then become a useful member of society and an honor to your name. As it is, you

are a popinjay—a grown up child seeking only amusement;—one who thinks himself privileged to make every speech a lie, because those lies are to raise a laugh, not make a fortune. Poor vanity! to become the laughing stock of fools—the acknowledged jester of the county! Your only chance of being torn from this Vanity Fair is being compelled to work for your livelihood."

"I am amazed, Mr. Bell, that you who pique yourself on never interfering in other people's concerns, and hold giving advice, the act of a fool, or a madman, should needlessly trouble yourself with my welfare; making me the exception to your rule of non-interference. It is beyond me to fathom the reason for this consideration."

"I will tell you, young man. I knew your father, and respected him; almost the only man I ever did respect."

"So because you respected the father, you

force your counsel on the son; taking every opportunity to condemn and annoy him."

The young man spoke warmly; but added almost immediately in a milder tone:—"For that father's sake I overlook it; but I have no inclination to turn digger, miner, or trader."

"And what are young men without professions? Buzzing drones!"

"I will not irritate you, sir; and ask what are old men soured by disappointment?—but rather change the subject, denying your right to take me to task. My father, whom you say you respected, had no profession."

"But your father, whom I did respect, was useful to his kind;—a liberal, and active magistrate—a judicious landlord—a considerate, but observing master. He did not leave all to his steward and attorney, whilst he was dancing after flirts, or making coxcombs laugh."

"You shall look over my accounts yourself sir, if that will please you; and for the Bench I will take my seat when I have become wise enough, and grave enough."

"Wise, and grave! And how can you become this, when your days are spent in idleness and folly? Is wisdom to come by the mere writing yourself magistrate, as some seem to think? Why not seek an acquaintance with the laws of the land?"

"Bless me, sir, there is no satisfying you. You require more than the laws of the land themselves: they only insist on your possessing so many hundreds a year, and the favor of the Lord Lieutenant—no particular wisdom or knowledge. Besides am I not a barrister?"

"You a barrister! In how many causes have you been employed?"

The speaker's scornful laugh was no slight trial to the Baronet's temper. The colour rose to his brow, but his eye fell on his father's

picture, then encountered Katharine's kindly look, and he answered gaily.

"Shame upon you, Mr. Bell, for this scandal on my legal powers. I have slept the right number of nights—I have paid the right sum of money—I have eaten the right number of dinners; and what would you more? The last alone is sufficient to establish my merits in eating England. Nothing can be done without a dinner—all things with one. A man is rated now—not by his worth—we have long ceased to be savages; not by his thousands, the rate so long maintained:—not by his rank—nobility is out of favor:—but by the number of the dinners which he has eaten, and others paid for. Having popular manners and tolerable powers of digestion, I look to being Chancellor in time."

"You will be nothing—or worse than nothing if not compelled to exertion. A frivolous jester! the county fool!"—growled Mr. Bell.

"Generally the wisest man of the company, so I will not take offence at the title. I cannot help wondering with your universal philanthrophy, that you should be so partial in your favor, wasting more counsel upon me than any other fifty, be they who they may: though I give you sorry encouragement, neither mending nor being grateful."

"True! most true!"

"Well then, sir, let the only wise man in the world for once take the advice of the only fool in the county, and cease to waste his wisdom on the ungrateful and incorrigible. If I must submit to rebuke, I own I would have it garnished, with kindly looks, and gentle words. Like the Egyptian Queen, I would have the venomed asp of blame concealed in flowers."

"Psha! only children wish the nauseous draught to be disguised,—men drink it as it comes."

"Then am I no man: and I pray you for

the future to consider me a child—a very little child; and make my mind's medicine the more palatable."

"I am on a par with yourself in wisdom, not to let you run your course unheeded," said Mr. Bell in anger, turning from him as he spoke.

The Baronet laughed; but not his usual happy laugh, for the strictures of his morose reprover always vexed him.

"Now Miss Darrell, to show off the remaining lions. Mr. Bell has the power of putting me out of humour more than any one I know; he is as a funeral bell always making me sad and dull. Let us turn away from my uncle John too, I like him now less than ever; indeed neither this, nor its pendant should remain in my own peculiar den, but that the arrangement was my father's; and therefore I do not change it."

"And why do you not like this picture?" asked Katharine, "I like it very much. One

boy looks so gay, and good-tempered; trying to teach his dog to dance, and laughing at his own folly all the time;—whilst the other, leaning against the tree, with a thoughtful look, and graceful air, has something strikingly noble in the expression of his features."

"Ay, there it is—graceful! strikingly noble! and you like the elder boy the best," remarked the Baronet pettishly.

"I do not quite know; but I think I should like the youngest best for an hour, or so, when I was in a very wild and playful mood; and the elder for a longer time, when willing to enact the sage."

"The younger only for your hours of folly! I thank you Miss Darrell."

Katharine looked towards him, struck with his pettish tone; then coloured and became embarrassed, an embarrassment increased by Mr. Bell's sarcastic laugh.

"I beg your pardon. I am so sorry;—but

I had no idea—I never saw the likeness—" stammered Katharine.

" Pray do not distress yourself Miss Darrell, I am used to these things, having lived long enough in the world to know that a Baronet must give place to an Earl."

" But I am very much distressed, that I should, though unintentionally, have said any thing that could annoy you;—you who have been so kind, so very kind, bearing with all my childish simplicity, and thinking only of giving me pleasure. Will you not forgive me ?"

" I should be more savage than I have already shown myself, could I withstand that gentle tone. You must be shocked at such a display of pettishness, and in my own house too. You are to see me in my worst colours to-day—all my weak points exposed. The truth is, that Mr. Bell, (if you stay within hearing you must take the consequences," he said, bowing mischievously to that gentleman)

and my cousin, the Earl of Ermiston, are *les bêtes noires* of my imagination. For my feelings towards the former you may perhaps account—my feelings towards the latter I will explain. When that picture was taken Edgar Morven and myself were staying with a distant relative, afterwards my guardian, as he had long been his. I ought to have loved Morven for there was much to admire in his character; but I did not ;—most probably never shall ;—and on this one point we feel alike. I would do him no harm, and I might do him good, if it would not cost me too much trouble, or perhaps I might do him more good from the very extent of the trouble out of a spirit of pride; but I delight not in his society—never select him as a confidant; and cannot help being aware of a feeling of jealousy and anger when he is preferred, and using greater endeavours to shine in his presence. I pretend not to defend this, only

to account for it; it is the evil consequence of injudiciously excited emulation.

"However kind Mrs. Hilton may gloss over the matter I certainly was some years ago the most mischievous and riotous of boys.—I leave you to say what I am as a man. Now my worthy guardian and his lady were the most sober and demure of human beings, consequently horrified at my boyish pranks, and misdemeanors. Lectures! Lectures! Lectures! nothing but lectures all day long—prosy—lengthy lectures, as if read from a book to one in whom they felt no interest;—duty—talk—not a single appeal to the heart; so I listened, that is was silent, not going to sleep, if I could help it; but I fear I was only the more riotous to compensate to myself for these never ending, wearying discourses; thus ever furnishing fresh subjects for censure and annoyance. The lectures on general principles not succeeding, emulation, as my guardian

termed it, was resorted to. Edgar Morven naturally of a calmer temperament was held up to me as a fitting model. 'I never knew Edgar Morven do this—I never heard Edgar Morven say that.' It was nothing but Edgar Morven morning, noon, and night, I was sick of the very name, and resolved to dislike its bearer. A laudable resolve you think—was it not a natural one? People little know the evil tempers they excite by these personal emulations.

"I determined to dislike Edgar Morven, and I succeeded. He was three years my senior, and far my superior in beauty of person, and elegance of manner; as for learning, I declared and I still believe with truth, that I was more than his equal, though his gravity made all suppose him the wiser of the two. Distantly related to the Earl of Ermiston, the sudden death of his father, an officer in the army, had reduced his mother to a very scanty income, wherewith to provide for the wants of herself

and only child in a style somewhat answering to their birth, for beneath that she would not stoop. A prouder woman than Mrs. Morven never breathed—she would have starved rather than submit to any thing which she considered derogatory to the noble blood of the Morvens and Stratherns. Her pride and poverty estranged her from most of her connections, but even the pinchings of penury never caused her to swerve from her purpose; and in justice to her maternal love, I must admit that she thought nothing a sacrifice for the welfare of her son; and I believe concealed half her own privations whilst she brought him up to consider all things secondary to the upholding his name and family. She never forgave my father for offering to place her son, before there was the slightest chance of his becoming an Earl, with one of the first Bankers in town, promising to aid him hereafter; and I have little doubt that I was shown no favor in consequence. A

Morven in trade! The thought alone was profanation! With personal beauty rarely surpassed, graceful manners, and a temper usually placid, though a taunt at his poverty and the consequent slights and privations could rouse him to fury, Edgar Morven was one of the most wretched of human beings. The pride his parent had so cherished was eating away his very life. His delicate health, his mother's constant murmurs and bitter complaints;—his own over sensitiveness, had crushed the buoyant hopes of youth; he had much of the glooming forethought of the man mingled with the fretfulness, and impatience of the boy. What was to become of him without money to enter any of the few professions which Mrs. Morven's prejudices would allow him to attempt? Was he to struggle on thus through life, his pride, and his poverty maintaining eternal warfare? Even then he was sinking into despondency, pining beneath the wrestling of his mind

against his fate. I was too penetrating not to see much of this, though an occasional word, that escaped him, when irritated by taunts, alone betrayed his feelings.

"Had we met as strangers—had his mother been less haughty—or had I not been lectured into hating, Edgar Morven and myself might have been on friendly terms; and I should probably have soon learnt to love as well as pity him; but this was not to be. Mrs. Morven showed her dislike at our first introduction, and blamed my father in my hearing, for what she termed a *mésalliance*, because my mother, one of the most amiable of beings, was only a poor clergyman's daughter. I fired up in my father's defence—she retorted—her son, understanding that I had taunted him with poverty, joined in the *mêlee*, and from that moment there was open war between us, most active on my part, I must admit, being of a more energetic disposition. Of course, in all disputes I was pro-

nounced in fault, which by no means increased my regard for my cousin. I rebelled at being painted on the same piece of canvass, but the good-tempered artist won me over by putting in my favorite dog, though I am sure he has made me look more amiable than I really did. There was another cause of ill-will between us. An old Scotch servant of Mrs. Morven's, pretending to second-sight, predicted that each should cross the hopes of the other; and that we should be rivals in love.

"We were men ere we met again, and our boyish disputes were not renewed; we are polite and obliging if we meet—occasionally visit; and the world calls us friends; and, as the world goes, we are friends!—we know how much, and how little so.

"Happily for him, the death of Lord Ermiston and his son in the same malignant fever, by giving him wealth and rank, released him from the struggle between pride and poverty,

which was wearing life away. The more amiable qualities of Edgar Morven show forth in the Earl of Ermiston; and he is generally esteemed—universally admired. Even the pride of Mrs. Morven has been softened by prosperity; and we no longer meet on cat and dog terms.

"There, Miss Darrell, as a penance for my petulance, I have made a humiliating confession; and really as honest a one as my self-love would permit. I dare say I was the most to blame; and I seek not to defend my present touchiness on the subject of a preference for my striking, and graceful cousin. Will you not give me absolution?"

"Rather admiration: few would so generously confess an error, and to a stranger;" replied Katharine kindly, having been much interested in his rapid sketch.

"Singular being!" remarked Mr. Bell. "You have said more evil in this matter of yourself, than I would have said of you: a

quarter of this blame from me would ha
put you in a blaze."

"Ay, sir; we bear with patience from
friend, what we resent from a foe."

"A foe!" murmured Mr. Bell, "strang
that no one regards me as a friend!"

"Stranger if they did, sir! I doubt if m
cousin Ermiston would thank you for wishin
the deceased Earl to rise from the grave; an
interpose between him and the title."

"I have no wish of the sort."

"Indeed! then it is only I who am honore
with this peculiar mark of your regard: m
gratitude should be an hundred fold."

"One plant but flourishes the more for th
storm that uproots another:—your cousi
sinks beneath misfortune—your energy rises t
subdue it!"

"So you would flatter me into gratitud
Mr. Bell, and then laugh at my folly; bu
that plan will not succeed. Leave me Eustac

Park; and you may call me what you please—idler, popinjay, and county fool!"

"The time may come when you will call yourself all these, and worse, Sir Herbert."

The Baronet made no reply, but drew Katharine's attention to the other pictures.

"What likeness have you discovered, Miss Banham?" he enquired shortly after, on hearing that young lady and others, who had entered the room with her, discussing some resemblance; whose he could not distinctly catch.

"No discovery of mine, Sir Herbert; I see no resemblance: the credit, if any, is due to Mrs. Bampton, who has found out a likeness between Miss Darrell, and Lord Ermiston."

"Miss Darrell, like Lord Ermiston!" exclaimed the Baronet, with a mocking laugh. "Really Mrs. Bampton the discoverer of the powers of steam was not to be compared to you."

"You may laugh as you please, Sir Herbert, but the likeness is clear enough. I appeal to Mr. Bell."

Mr. Bell put on his spectacles with most provoking deliberation, and after scrutinizing Katharine, who protested in vain against being so critically examined, he pronounced in favor of Mrs. Bampton.

"There certainly is a resemblance, though very slight."

"I knew how you would decide," remarked Sir Herbert, quickly,

One or two agreed with Mr. Bell, and Mrs. Bampton, whilst the rest denied the faintest shadow of resemblance.

"Now for the Oriel chamber; and then you have seen all worth seeing at Eustace Park," said their young host, now quite restored to his usual temper, which had been ruffled by Mr. Bell's remarks, and the discussion on his cousin. Once out of sight of

the portrait, he was himself again, amusing all with his gay discourse.

"Never judge by appearances. As Mr. Bampton says, I have been deceived by appearances more than once. Turn to that demure looking lady with her stately plume, and her prim, closed lips:—she was the arrantest coquette that ever breathed; caused the death of three lovers—the misery of as many more; and died bearing her maiden name as a punishment. One lover stabbed himself in her presence, and she upbraided him whilst dying with having spoiled her favorite dress, his blood having spurted out upon her robe. That dusky mark is meant to represent it; but, from the fading of time, it only looks like a defect. A second threw himself from off a cliff, she having dared him to the act; and she had the barbarity as he lay beneath to bid the vultures to the feast; whilst the third fell in some

perilous adventure driven to desperation by her scorn. She mocked at their deaths, and the wooing of others:—but she too loved at length. She stood before the altar with a splendid train, her intended lord, one of the noblest Barons of the land. The priest began the service; but when the Baron should have placed the ring upon her hand, he was struck as if by catalepsy; he held the golden circlet out, but could not put it on, whilst the three at whose deaths she had mocked passed slowly by, each placing a ring upon her finger. The service was concluded; for the priest could not pause, nor the lady resist; none could interfere, for the glassy glare of the spectre bridegrooms was as a resistless spell on all. The benediction was pronounced—and three dead husbands bore away one living bride. Four saddled steeds were at the gate. The spectre bridegrooms aided the bride to mount with a gallantry that might lesson the

bridegrooms of earth; and then away!—away!—across the land; flames issuing from their horses' nostrils, sparks falling from their manes.—Away! away!—with silent speed, for the lady neither spoke nor screamed. The honey-moon had passed; and the lady was found on her couch in her bridal attire as when she had left the altar. She never spoke of the past; and none dared to question. The Baron died within the week; and no one after that was venturesome enough to woo the lady. At her funeral three black figures uninvited walked as mourners, departing, as they came, unknown. Where they had touched the pall, it shrivelled up as parchment in the flames; and voices that were none of earth joined in the requiem for the dead. The coffin was opened some time after—there was no body there! See the horrible effect of cruelty and coquetry! I always tell the tale to young ladies as a warning. Bear it in

mind Miss Darrell: and be gracious to your wooers."

"Is this true, Mrs. Hilton?" asked Katharine turning to the wondering housekeeper.

"La, ma'am, it is impossible to say what is true, and what is not, Sir Herbert tells so many new stories every day; but I never heard a stranger one than that. I always understood that it was the first Lady Eustace, who died before her husband; as good and quiet a lady as needs to be. I am sure the epitaph in the church says so.

"Believe an epitaph, Mrs. Hilton! did ever wise man, or woman do so yet?" exclaimed her merry master.

"Really, Sir Herbert Eustace, I must say that this conduct is most unjustifiable, unwarrantable, and discreditable. You told me the other day that the lady was supposed to have been a great favorite, indeed privately

married to Prince Henry, eldest son of James the first. I repeated the same to Mr. Hopton the great antiquarian and genealogist, and we turned over every book in his library to ascertain the fact; nay, he wrote to Mr. Parsons, and some others on the subject. I must say again Sir Herbert such conduct is unjustifiable, un—"

"Before you proceed, Mr. Bampton, are you sure—quite sure, that this is the portrait? Are you not thinking of the one in the hall —the lady who married Henri de Jansen?"

"Yes, Sir Herbert, I am quite sure that this is the portrait; and that you said the lady had been privately married to Prince Henry. The antiquaries have been sifting the matter these three months; and several papers have been written on the subject. I shall not mince the matter, Sir Herbert: you cannot expect that I should; and you will find—"

Here Mr. Bampton's discourse was cut short by a summons from a brother amateur antiquary; and the Baronet, who now gave way to his mirth, was spared the threat of what he should have to endure.

"Fie upon you! You will be the death of poor Mr. Bampton; ridicule to him is worse than Prussic acid! You ought to be put in the corner for telling stories," exclaimed several of his guests.

"This is the gratitude that I am to expect for hunting dusty and worm eaten tomes to find pretty and instructive legends wherewith to entertain you ladies," replied the incorrigible Baronet. "The fact is, that you are displeased at the moral of my tale, and thus endeavour to throw discredit on the story; but you cannot disprove it; so I warn you to be merciful."

"Is it really true then?" asked a very matter of fact young lady.

"True? to be sure! Let those take heed who doubt, lest the three dark bridegrooms, and the bride should visit them at dead of night. Even you Miss Darrell are ungrateful enough to look incredulous. Say no when wooed, at your peril;—remember I have warned you!"

"I am not alarmed," said the laughing girl.

"Do you mean that you do not believe my tale?"

"Not one word, without a certificate of its truth from the antiquaries. Will you apply to them?"

"Cruel! not yet; I must keep out of their way for awhile. Now I suppose we must return, since I have nothing further to show, and some of the party are getting impatient."

"And all your pretty stories are exhausted," added Katharine playfully.

"Not so, as you shall find; I scorn the imputation."

He kept his word to the horror of Mr. Bampton, the wonder of Mr. George Banham, who always listened to the Baronet with open mouth and eyes, and the delight of all the rest, save Mr. Bell. Sir Herbert told a tale of every remarkable object, and generally with such gravity, that the Society of Antiquaries stood a chance of being again put in commotion by the reports of Mr. Bampton, only half sceptical despite his late annoyance.

"Remember, Miss Darrell, that you promised I should go with you and hear your report to Mrs. Arnold," said the Baronet lifting Katharine from her horse.

"Come then!" she replied dancing across the hall; she bearing the bouquet, he the strawberries, which his servant had carried carefully.

"See, dear mamma, what I have brought

you! And I have been so happy!" cried the animated girl, kneeling before Mrs. Arnold, throwing off her hat, and shaking back her long bright curls. "See here are beautiful flowers! and look at these strawberries! Such a dear old gardener too! and such a beautiful house! and such strange sights! I only wanted you there and I should have been quite—quite happy! I like Eustace Park almost as well as Beechen Cliff. And Sir Herbert has promised me a thousand pretty things; and told me a thousand pretty stories;—all true—as true as Jack and the Bean Stalk," she added archly.

"Which—the promises, or the stories?" asked Mrs. Arnold happy in her favorite's happiness.

"Oh, I hope the promises are all really true—are they not?" looking up at the Baronet.

"You may depend on those; and their

fulfilment shall not be contingent on your belief of my stories; and that shows great magnanimity, considering your mortifying incredulity.

"Thank you! then I shall count indeed on the doves, and the pigeons, and the puppy, and the flowers. Such beautiful flowers! and such a dear little puppy! May I not have them, mamma?"

"Why, you are become quite a child again," replied Mrs. Arnold, smiling at her raptures. "I am afraid Sir Herbert must have found it difficult to keep you in any order."

"I assure you I did; for she paid little heed to any thing I said: and I was obliged to threaten her with your displeasure, and various other bugaboos."

"Now shame on you, Sir Herbert! you know you encouraged all my wildness."

"Now shame on you, Miss Darrell! I ap-

peal to Miss Banham. Did not I behave inimitably?—just as a careful elder brother should to a wild sister?"

"Exactly so! not the shadow of reproach can rest on you;" replied Miss Banham acquiescing readily in an assertion so pleasing to herself:—she had not the slightest objection to his considering Katharine as a sister.

"There, Miss Darrell! make the *amende* if you please; and assure Mrs. Arnold that you, and all beside admit I enacted elder brother to perfection."

"A kind elder brother too;" she replied with grateful warmth, adding playfully; "not only indulging present whims, and fancies, but storing my mind for the hereafter with moral tales, as full of truth, as wisdom."

"You are incorrigible!" exclaimed the laughing Baronet.

"A family failing—a sister treading in the ways of her elder brother;" observed Miss Banham in most harmonious tones, and with a flattering smile.

CHAPTER V.

"On him each lady's look was bent."
Scott.

"Schemes! Wit plans—and Fortune sets aside."

"Now, Miss Darrell, to put the sincerity of your regard for me, to the test," began Sir Herbert Eustace, joining Katharine in the drawing room; the one or two who had descended after the labours of the toilet being occupied at the other end of the apartment.

"What an awful beginning!" replied Katharine gaily. "I am half inclined to deny having any regard for you."

"You who are so pitiful could not be so cruel;—you who are so true, could not be so false;—the whole world of Sallowfield has decided to its satisfaction that we have a brotherly and sisterly regard; and you, who have stood up as my champion against those fearful Ogres, in common parlance, Bell and Bampton, surely you will not desert me in my hour of need?"

"You know how to win my aid by appealing to my generosity, which Mr. Bell has warned me will one day lead me into difficulties. In what awful peril do you stand? Are all the antiquaries coming in a body to declaim against you? Or has the ancestress whom you so defamed appeared with all her bridegrooms?"

"Cruel creature! to remind me of my

errors and their consequences. Yet these I might have borne:—my peril is more fearful still."

"Indeed! What can it be?"

"Dethronement! Nothing less than dethronement! Will you not aid me? With your assistance I shall still hope to subdue the rebels."

"What do you mean? Is a rival *diseur* coming to Sallowfield? Fear not a competitor."

"Hard hearted! thus to mock my misery. I fear no rival *diseur*—it is a rival idol that I dread."

"An idol?"

"Yes; have you not heard?"

"I have heard nothing particular."

"In truth? Then you are not aware that my irresistible cousin, Edgar Morven, Earl of Ermiston—

'Who never did an *awkward* thing,
And never said a *droll* one."

is to be here to-night, on his way into Wiltshire."

"I was not aware of this. Is he the person whose portrait I saw at Eustace Park?"

"The same. And now do you not pity me?"

"I fear I am not as pitiful as you imagine. Though you may not absolutely desire his presence, I understood that you no longer regarded him with such great dislike, as to feel that presence disagreeable."

"Ah, Miss Darrell! with no ambition to reign yourself, you cannot comprehend my peril. Listen. I should care nothing about meeting my cousin on neutral ground—out in the wide world;—there one expects competitors; but thirty miles round Eustace Park I consider my own domain:—there I expect to reign Lord Paramount. A young bachelor Baronet with no absolute deformity; not a positive fool, whatever Mr. Bell may say, and above all, with a fine estate, and ten thousand

a year, I consider that I am, and ought to be for such a circuit,

"Monarch of all I survey."
and have
"Wives before me whence to choose."

"You have seen what an idol I am at Sallowfield; and I am not less so at other places I assure you. Whether the homage paid me now would be withheld should my uncle John return, I am not called on to determine."

"Do you believe that it would be withheld Sir Herbert? enquired Katharine, half in jest and half in earnest.

"Perhaps I do not—yet it might be so nevertheless; you are too young and generous yourself to understand these things; at any rate, it is very delightful to be an idol; but now I must be un-sphered. A Baronet of ten thousand a year cannot compete with an Earl

of fifteen, a handsomer fellow too by far even I must admit; and some think the very perfection of grace and high breeding. Being an Earl, particularly here where Earls are so scarce, no mental defect would outweigh his title, even if I could prove any which I cannot —or will not; so the only debate is whether I shall resign my sovereignty with a good grace—fly the field—or battle for my right. Will you advise me ?"

"With pleasure; it is so very flattering at seventeen to be consulted. I, being a woman, protest against your doing battle for your right, since warfare is not pleasing to our pitying hearts: you being a man, I decide against flight, such telling of cowardice; so my advice is, if you cannot retain your absolute sovereignty; and absolute power brings little good to ruled or ruler, that you should meet your rival as a friend, offering him with a good grace a portion of your idolship."

"No: no. *Aut Cæsar, aut nullus!* There

can be no community between Edgar Morven and Herbert Eustace:" replied the Baronet with an abruptness that spoke more of earnest than of jest; then, marking Katharine's surprise, he added in a lighter tone, yet still with a touch of seriousness; "my old feelings are not quite subdued, as you perceive; and I verily believe, notwithstanding all my jesting, and the little store I set upon the flattering words and smiles so showered on me, that I shall ill brook seeing him the cynosure of woman's eyes. However I shall abide the trial, as you advise. But you—you are not not like most—you will not change?"

"Do not think it," replied Katharine warmly, touched by his appeal.

"*Vive Henri Quatre donc!* As long as you are on my side, I fear no league, and shall be conqueror yet."

Katharine laughed at his pretended triumph; and asked how long Lord Ermiston intended to remain.

"Perhaps till his fastidious taste shall receive some fearful shock. I would not be one of the Banham family during his stay, proud as they are of the honor, for the privilege of seeing all that ocean has in its rich depths. Such fussing, and fretting! and such fright lest the said fussing and fretting should be observed! He ought to marry a country hoyden to medicine his fastidiousness, only it would be martyrdom to both:—neither could survive the year."

"If so very fastidious why come at all?"

"The house bears the character of being well arranged; and who can resist Mrs. Banham's friendly pressing, and the fascinations of the young ladies? Besides Mr. Banham was once of essential service to Major Morven; and Ermiston is not ungrateful."

"Not quite such a hobgoblin then as you have been trying to persuade me," said Katharine with a smile.

"Yes, all that is horrible. Remember! you are pledged to this belief."

"No: I am only pledged not to change my opinion of yourself."

And it was well for the keeping of her word that she was not pledged to think Lord Ermiston the fearful personage his cousin had jestingly pourtrayed him. His manners and appearance were peculiarly prepossessing—to many irresistible; and if there was at times a something rather stately in his demeanour, it only seemed to harmonize with his courtly elegance, making his attentions the more flattering. What might have appeared offensive pride in a more energetic character was only dignity in him.

As Sir Herbert had asserted:

> "He never did an *awkward* thing,
> And never said a *droll* one."

Lord Ermiston and drollery! There was

worse than treason in the bare idea! Love and a rabbit skin were far less incompatible.

He was polite, scrupulously polite to all; and if any thing shocked his fastidious taste, the very shocking was only proved by a slight accession of dignity. You could not imagine his lordship would ever be guilty of a rudeness, of this he seemed as incapable as of an awkwardness; and his manner bore the stamp of sincerity. Though no great talker generally, he could, at fitting times, be animated; and there was not that chilling feel in his society which occasionally accompanies excessive elegance. The greatest charm of that elegance was the absence of all appearance of study:—if not originally his by nature, it had become a portion of his being by long habit—the natural of art.

Mrs. Arnold and the Earl were mutually delighted; her gentleness accorded with his ideas of what woman should be; and there was good reason to suppose that her protegée,

though his antipodes in manner, shared in the prepossession. There seems a sympathy in contrast, as in harmony, however Irish this may sound:—there are attractions which can scarcely be accounted for on philosophical principles; and are perfectly incomprehensible to the unlearned. Lord Ermiston's characteristic was an harmonious elegance; an almost imperturbable quietude: he never wondered—was rarely delighted, and there was nothing about him striking or compelling: his mind had grace, rather than power:—even the perfection of his features required examination to be duly appreciated. He was not a man of impulse: but well practised in the modes and requirements of the world.

The very reverse of this was Katharine Darrell. Not that she was deficient in elegance, but hers was the wild grace of nature—the elegance of a refined and delicate mind, rather than a harmony of manner, arising from a mingling with the polished. She felt

wonder and delight, and still gave way to almost childlike bursts of gaiety; nay even asked the Earl to join in them, by looks, without the fear of a rebuking gravity. He was the accomplished pupil of society—she the untutored child of nature;—hoping all things, seeing all things in the brightness of her own sunny spirit.

Days, weeks, had passed, and yet Lord Ermiston and Sir Herbert Eustace were visitors at Sallowfield: and still Katharine Darrell smiled on the young Baronet, talking gaily with him as on their first acquaintance; but her thoughts dwelt more on the words of his cousin; and her eyes unconsciously turned to him for sympathy and approbation.

"Well Maria, what do you say now?" asked Mrs. Banham of her eldest daughter, who stood arranging her curls in that lady's dressing room.

"I say now, what I said before; give me time, and I shall be Lady Ermiston. So well

have I studied his tastes, that not once have I shocked them; and you saw how readily, I might say eagerly, he consented to prolong his visit."

"I did. But are you sure that Katharine Darrell is not in your way?"

"What a question!" replied Maria with a contemptuous smile. "Katharine Darrell—the mere country girl, startling one a thousand times a day with her bursts of childlike gaiety and gratitude, rival Maria Banham in the estimation of the Earl of Ermiston! You are no flatterer by the supposition. Not but what Katharine is an endearing creature from her very wildness, though not the beauty Mrs. Arnold fancies. I could love her if it were requisite."

"I hope you are right;—but he is always near her," said the anxious mother.

"Yes; and I would have him so. The poor child has taken a fancy to me, and rarely leaves my side. Some of the gentlemen

find her naiveté, as they term it, very attractive; but for Lord Ermiston—why her sudden sallies almost seduce him into wonderment. Depend upon it that he thinks her as I think her, a grateful, animated girl—fitted for the country, not the court. She must be subdued and harmonized, before her sister-in-law, the Countess of Ermiston, can present her as Mrs. George Banham."

"I hope you know what you are about, Maria; for I tell you and your sister fairly that there is little time to lose."—"And when are you to be Lady Eustace, Charlotte?"

"When Sir Herbert asks me."

"And when will that be?"

"Soon I imagine."

"Indeed! You are both sanguine;— I hope you may not be deceived."

"I hope so too."

"I warn you not to be too secure; and I

ask you, as I asked your sister, may not Katharine Darrell cross your hopes?"

"Oh no! she is so very a child—so perfectly unformed—so singularly natural."

"Singularly natural I admit; but I doubt if that nature has not charms for many; and with a child's gaiety and simplicity she has a woman's feeling;—with a child's manner a woman's heart. Look to both the cousins."

Her daughters laughed.

"Sir Herbert is ever near her, as is Lord Ermiston."

"Yes; we are all together; and she certainly is interesting. For the first day I was uneasy, but the Baronet's manner to us both is quite changed now, and I am convinced he only praised her then in the hope of piquing me. He evidently considers her only as a fascinating child; indeed he told me so; and she as evidently only considers him as a kind friend. They really are as the careful

brother, and the wild sister he spoke of on the day of the visit to Eustace Park. You saw how quickly he consented to stay, on the plea of some painting at his own house, when I joined my entreaties to yours."

"I cannot deny that; but my anxiety makes me fearful. If I could see my daughters well married, I should be happy."

"I think you have every chance of that," said Maria.

"How does George get on with Katharine?"

"He gets as near her as he can, is always ready to tie her sandal, hand her a chair, or carry her shawl, when not too much occupied in staring at Sir Herbert: I am afraid his wooing does not thrive. She is always very kind, and listens politely when he talks to her; but all this I take it is more for our sake than his; and perhaps we may persuade her to become our sister:—he is too obstinate to take a hint."

"I fear, Maria, that she is too much flattered by the other gentlemen."

"One or two admire her, but she is such a thorough simpleton as not to know it; and as for taking advantage of their admiration, that is entirely beyond her comprehension."

"All the better this simplicity for our plans; and I doubt if Mrs. Arnold is much wiser. As long as the girl does not cross your hopes let no one breathe a suspicion of her birth, since I intend her to be my daughter:—should she interfere, let her look to it!—but we must be cautious. Mrs. Arnold will endure no slight on her favorite; and my old friend has wealth at her own disposal."

CHAPTER VI.

"Rail on! I sinn'd—and I must bear:
The tongue of malice hath no sting
Like my own thoughts."

"WHEN is Walker's marriage with Miss Stephens to take place?" asked Sir Herbert of Mr. Hensworth, one of the numerous dinner guests at Sallowfield on the same day in which the preceding conversation had taken place.

"That is a good one, Sir Herbert! to pretend not to know of the match being off."

"I know nothing of the sort. How should I?"

"How should you? Why it was your doing."

"How can you fancy that. I have never interfered in the matter: on the contrary, I esteem Walker, and like the little I have seen of Miss Stephens."

"What after the violent flirtation, to say the least of it, that you saw her carry on in the wood?"

"What do you mean, Hensworth? This is all a riddle to me: I never saw any thing to disapprove of in Miss Stephens."

"Come, come, Sir Herbert, this will not do. You have too good a memory to have forgotten Miss Stephens's flirting in the wood at the back of her father's house with a very handsome young man in the dusk of the evening. If you have forgotten the tale, I have not; or my friend either. It was a capital story! and you told it so inimitably.

Johnson declares he never laughed so much in his life. Then Walker's looks—first refusing to believe—and then pretending to be indifferent. Oh it was capital!"

"You do not mean to say that my story caused the breaking off the match?"

"I do though. Walker went to the lady in a precious rage—she replied with spirit—and when he declared her unworthy of his love, and threatened to leave her, she bade him do so, and return no more. So some say; others assert that he wrote to decline the honor of her hand, convinced that his love alone would not content her. I know not which story is the true one, but that the match is off is certain. Walker was always quick of temper, and inclined to jealousy; and you played on that temper well: the story did you immortal credit."

"Any thing but credit," replied the Baronet quickly. "I was sorry afterwards that I had carried the joke so far, but concluded Walker

would seek his lady love, as I bade him, and that all would be explained: my leaving the neighbourhood the next day prevented my learning to the contrary. I shall not easily forgive myself this folly."

"Folly! 'Tis thy vocation, Hal," remarked Mr. Bell sarcastically; but the Baronet took no notice of the observation.

"Never vex yourself about the matter, Sir Herbert. The lover will get another mistress —the mistress another lover—and all will be well. It is no such rare occurrence a match being broken off; and since the young lady was such a flirt—"

"The young lady was no flirt, at least that I know of," replied the Baronet frankly. "The gentleman was her brother just returned from abroad; and I concluded that you and your friend knew that it was all a joke."

"A joke? Do you mean that it was nothing but a joke, Sir Herbert? I could not have imagined it possible. I have heard

you praised for making a good story out of nothing, but I never suspected you of doing so then; and therefore did not scruple to repeat the tale. This is carrying the matter a little too far:—a sober man does not like the chance of being called in question for his words," observed Mr. Hensworth sulkily; far more vexed at having taken for truth what was but jest, than at all the misery which had ensued.

"It was carrying the matter too far," said the Baronet as frankly as before, though his cheek had flushed at the rebuking tone. "Where is Walker now?"

"Gone abroad, I believe."

"I have been much to blame, and am truly grieved."

"Pooh. Pooh, Sir Herbert; your good nature thinks too much of this," remarked another guest. "As Hensworth says, it is no such rare occurrence:—the girl will get a new lover; and, depend upon it, both marry within

the year. Girls are always flirts; and I dare say you said no more than the truth."

"I tell you I never saw Miss Stephens flirt in my life."

"Nor any other pretty girl, I suppose," replied the gentleman incredulously.

"I speak only of Miss Stephens; and see no reason why I should be doubted, when I tell the truth," remarked the Baronet warmly.

"Did you ever read the fable of the Boy and the Wolf, Sir Herbert Eustace?" asked a sarcastic voice at his elbow.

"I never expected any thing but reproach and sarcasm from you, Mr. Bell; but, in the present instance, you can scarcely say worse of me, than I think of myself; so I must submit in patience."

Mr. Bell made no reply; but there was little sign of his asperity being softened.

"You think too much of this, Sir Herbert," said another. "Walker's jealousy should bear the blame—he deserves it. Why did not

he go to the lady, and ask her as you told him? It will teach him greater coolness for the future; and you can write to him, and the lady too if you like it;—the making up of a quarrel, you know, is the renewing of love."

"To be sure! When was a rich, lively, wasteful young Baronet in the wrong?" remarked Mr. Bell.

"You are too severe," interposed Charlotte Banham: "Sir Herbert meant no harm. Where will you find one with a kinder heart, or more inclined to assist every friend? And with his wit and talent, one cannot wonder that he should embellish a little."

"Meant no harm! Nor did the man who entered the powder magazine with an unguarded candle; yet two hundred persons lost their lives! Kind heart! So has the spendthrift—and the fool;—yet wealth is squandered—the owner becomes a beggar;—and

the worthy alone have failed to profit by the squandering. Wit and talent will embellish! For what purpose? To raise the laugh of folly!—to win the plaudits of the idle, the wicked, and the thoughtless! Splendid ambition! Who does not sigh for wit and talent?"

"Come, come Bell: we know you always say worse than you mean," remarked Mr. Banham. "Sir Herbert already suffers more than enough for his joke."

"Yet would do the same to-morrow:—there are some animals that take long in the reclaiming."

"Oh fie!—for shame! Mr. Bell," exclaimed several of the ladies, with whom the Baronet was a great favorite.

"Come here, Lord Ermiston, and help me to defend your cousin," said Mr. Banham, who had not discovered the coolness between the relatives;—their manner to each other

having been what the world considered friendly.

"Ermiston will not defend me," remarked Sir Herbert quickly.

"I am no Quixote, Eustace, if that is what you mean: nor do I enter with your delight into a jest; but neither do I join in Mr. Bell's severity. You will no doubt repair the evil: and be more cautious for the future. You promised me to sing, Miss Banham:—your witching tones will harmonize our thoughts."

"Thank you for your defence, most trusty, and well beloved cousin."

The Baronet's remark brought a slight accession of colour into the Earl's cheek, but induced no reply. His Lordship was not a person to engage in warfare unless compelled to do so, or irritated beyond control.

"Indeed, Sir Herbert, I hope you will be more cautious for the future, as your noble cousin so wisely advises. Such stories are most unjustifiable and unwarrantable; and

now that we are on the subject, I must ask you a question, which I have been some minutes wishing to put. Did not you tell me that Mr. Stagg had been called to the bar?" said the prosy Mr. Bampton.

"Certainly," replied the Baronet, with a droll mingling of shame, mischief, and vexation.

"There, Mr. Banham! you seemed to doubt me. You are quite sure, Sir Herbert? May I ask who told you?"

"I forget:—some lawyer, I believe."

"You know it for certain?"

I saw him at the Bar."

"Where Sir Herbert? Excuse my questions, but—"

"You remember the confusion among the antiquaries; and the hubbub concerning the Sanhein fossil," exclaimed the Baronet, forgetting all his former regret in the pleasure of mystifying the prosy, pompous, boring Mr. Bampton."

"Really, Sir Herbert Eustace, both those cases were unjustifiable, and unwarrantable—quite beneath a person of your rank and consideration; but we will confine ourselves at present to Mr. Stagg," observed Mr. Bampton pompously, with a heightened colour, the commotion which he had caused among the Antiquarians, and Geologists being a standing and vexatious joke against him. "Where did you see Mr. Stagg?"

"Some where on the Western circuit; Exeter I think."

"And you said that his father had also practised at the bar?"

"Yes; one is as certain as the other."

"There, Mr. Banham, I told you so: really people should be careful how they spread reports—no man's good name is safe—such gossipping is most unjustifiable, and unwarrantable. It is but fair to tell you now, Sir Herbert what has induced me to ask these questions, for I am not a curious person.

After what you said, I invited Mr. Stagg to my house, and introduced him to Mr. Cooper, who asked him to dinner; and now the report is that Mr. Stagg's father kept an Inn, and the young man acted as waiter. I must beg you, Sir Herbert, to write to Mr. Cooper, or contradict the report in person, as I hear that gentleman is very angry with me for the introduction. Of course you can have no objection to vouch for Mr. Stagg's having been at the bar, and his father before him?"

"None in the world," replied the Baronet, no longer able to repress a laugh, in which he was joined by nearly all within hearing, whilst Mr. Bampton stared at the general mirth, perfectly unconscious of the mystification and play on words.

"What is the meaning of all this laughter. gentlemen? After the late warning Sir Herbert can scarcely have been daring enough to fabricate another tale: but perhaps his regret was only pretended."

"Breed a wolf as you may, he will still look to the wood," remarked Mr. Bell in his usual sarcastic manner.

The Baronet turned from his look, feeling the justice of his rebuke; whilst Mr. Banham taking Mr. Bampton aside, explained the mystification, and tried to pacify his wrath; but in the latter he utterly failed. The pompous proser was not to be mollified.

"Sir Herbert Eustace," he began, in a much louder tone than usual, bursting from his host's detaining hold, "I consider your conduct in this affair not only unjustifiable, and unwarrantable; but quite incompatible with your station in society. First,—unjustifiable from one gentleman to another, more particularly from a young man to one more advanced in years;—to one, I may say it without vanity, who never allows himself for the sake of displaying wit to make out a good story:—secondly, unwarrantable, as no conduct of mine has furnished you with an excuse for

making me the subject of a foolish jest, seeing that I never jest myself. I disdain it as beneath me—as below a man of wisdom and learning—fit only for boys and triflers.—Unwarrantable towards me considering my birth and station; birth perhaps equal to your own, Sir Herbert Eustace, though my ancestors did not think a title of sufficient value to be bought:—unwarrantable towards Mr. Cooper, a most respectable man with several thousands a year, and likely to increase his wealth."

"Hear! Hear! Hear! Hear! Hear! Hear!" shouted some of the young men with whom he was no favorite.

"What is the matter?" enquired Mrs. Arnold, entering at the moment, and naturally wondering at the noise.

"Nothing but a Bampton lecture," replied the culprit with a quiet smile, which still more provoked the wrathful haranguer.

"Nothing, Sir Herbert Eustace! is it nothing to rob a parent of his only child? to

subject him to the misery of seeing his darling daughter, heiress of his riches, the wife of a low born fellow, a common waiter? You should bear all the blame of the elopement."

"Elopement! Is this true, Mr. Bampton?"

"True, Sir Herbert! to be sure it is! Have I not said it? Do you suppose all like yourself? And now what defence will you make?"

"None. I would say that I am truly grieved; but having said so once before this evening, you might fairly doubt the truth of my assertion. I have been wrong—very wrong;—and blame me, as you please, I have no right to complain. It is no slight feeling of shame and regret which can induce me to say this, and abide by it."

"And how long will those feelings last? Till the wind shall change?" asked Mr. Bell.

"I have deserved this, and must submit;" replied Sir Herbert, crimsoning to the very temples; more galled at the sarcasms of the cynic than at aught else.

"It will be well young man if this shame lead to amendment: a confession of error is of little use without its abandonment," began Mr. Bampton with a triumphant, self-satisfied tone of rebuke which it required all the Baronet's strong sense of guilt to endure with patience. "Many people seem to think that if they say they have been wrong, they should be absolved from all further consequences; but this is a very mistaken idea. They should go beyond that—they should take advice, and example, from those older and wiser than themselves. Having seen the deplorable effects of a course so unjustifiable, and unwarrantable, I will venture to hope, with your cousin, that you will be more cautious for the future. Doubtless Lord Ermiston will advise you: and his steadiness and dislike to idle

jests may stand as sureties for a different course."

"Pardon me, Mr. Bampton; I must decline becoming surety for my cousin, having so many errors of my own to answer for."

"No, no, my Lord; you are a model of a young man, I have not heard you tell a good story, as they call it, or say a good thing since your arrival. I own it would be unjustifiable, to insist on your becoming surety for your cousin's future conduct; but you can join me in giving good advice."

"I doubt if good advice from me would much pleasure, or profit my cousin Herbert; permit me therefore to resign the task to one so much more highly gifted," replied the Earl withdrawing, as he bowed, from the extended hand of the proser put forth to grasp his button.

"You are too modest as to your own powers, my Lord; and think too highly of mine," recommenced the gratified discourser;

but the conclusion of this second Bampton lecture was only heard by poor Mr. Banham, on whose button the tiresome lecturer laid strong hold, trying to content himself with his untalkative friend as a listener.

"Who would not be contented to be patiently heard by a host?" remarked one of the party.

Some crowded round the really vexed Baronet, assuring him that he deserved but little blame, as it was only a clever hoax; others dispersed to their own amusements.

"Come and join me in a duet, Sir Herbert —your favorite," said Charlotte Banham soothingly. "Mr. Bampton is enough to put any one in the fidgets. Do coax your cousin into better spirits, Lord Ermiston. There is no such great mischief done;—only a jealous lover put into a tantrum, and a miser's daughter eloped."

"You overrate my powers. I own no spell to compel my cousin to good spirits; nor do I

think the elopement of a young lady with an innkeeper's son such a trivial misfortune. I am no favorer of a *mésalliance*," replied his Lordship.

"No, nor I; but Sir Herbert is so very sorry, and never intended to do harm; besides Mr. Cooper's own father was only a manufacturer."

"That makes a difference, and there is little evil done; so do pray laugh, Eustace:—the ladies wish it."

"We differ on this point, Ermiston, as we have often done on others; the moral evil is the same:—whether the girl's grandfather was manufacturer or Earl, Mr. Cooper's feelings as a parent must be equally wounded. I have been blamed more, and less than I deserve; a hundred invented or embellished stories have been laughed at and applauded, which might equally have wrought a separation or an elopement;—it is the act of false-

hood, and not its accidental consequence for which I merit censure."

"You were ever skilful at definitions Eustace; so settle the point as may best content your own conscience," replied his Lordship slightingly, as he turned to the piano at which Miss Banham had taken her station.

Sir Herbert was annoyed at his cousin's manner; he looked over some prints for a few moments, and then joined Katharine, who was sitting rather apart arranging some work for Mrs. Banham

"Are you come to help me?" she said kindly, finding that he did not speak, and seeing that he was ruffled.

"What if I came to upbraid you?"

"What evil have I done?"

"Ask your own heart? Have you kept your promise?"

"I know of none that I have not kept."

"Would you have me believe then that you

have not gone over to the enemy?" he demanded with some bitterness.

"Whose enemy?"

"Mine—Ermiston."

"Gone over to Lord Ermiston? You put strange questions Sir Herbert Eustace," she replied with symptoms of displeasure, and a flushing of the cheek, which was bent upon her work.

"And you make evasive answers, Miss Darrell."

"I do not understand with what you charge me, Sir Herbert."

"Perhaps you do not wish to understand: I have not before found you hard of comprehension."

"You have not before spoken in riddles."

"Oh! you shall have no cause to complain on that head: I will speak as to a babe. You were pledged before my cousin came to think of me as you did then:—not to side with my rival—not to desert the setting, for the rising

sun:—in short, not to flout the Baronet because the Earl was by."

"I have done none of this. You cannot mean to accuse me of servility to rank?"

"Not exactly," meeting her indignant look. "You have bowed down to elegance and winning manner, rather than to rank; as yet, you are neither servile nor calculating. Do you mean to be very grateful for this last admission?"

"I admire your cousin's virtues."

"Virtues!" he repeated scornfully.

"Yes, virtues: you cannot deny him many, however youthful disagreements may have disunited you."

"You would set it down as malice, or envy if I did deny them."

"I should be very sorry so to do."

"Why sorry?"

"Because I have received so much of kindness from Sir Herbert Eustace that I should be grieved to think less highly of him."

"Indeed!" he exclaimed with a brightened look; then added with some embarrassment;—"But what could you think of him this evening?"

"I thought more highly of him than I had ever thought before. There are few who would have confessed error with such frankness; or borne harsh rebuking with such meekness."

"And you thought this? Then I am repaid for all my own remorse;—the galling words of the sarcastic, and the pompous, the polite forbearance of the unfeeling."

She had spoken warmly as she had felt; but there was something in the young man's manner that made her seem more busy with her work.

"Yet you never said a word in my defence," he continued in a more sober tone.

"There was no need, so many spoke;

and little girls, they say, should be seen, not heard."

"You a girl! You are a woman, with a woman's heart;—her feelings and her spells."

"You forget my wildness at Eustace Park," she remarked, blushing at his earnestness.

"I do not forget it. It was an outburst of delight in a young, guileless heart—not the mere wonder of a simple child. You have the charms of child and woman—the guilelessness, the trust of one;—the depth of feeling—the dignity—the devotion of the other."

"Nay, nay, Sir Herbert; you said yourself that I was but a child."

"I might;—but this evening has proved that all I say must not be relied on."

"So I feel."

"I am no flatterer to you, if that is

what you mean;—I hope that you are none to me."

"I a flatterer, Sir Herbert!"

"I will hope not;—but why did you turn away, when I was accused? Why did you not join in consoling, if not in defending?"

"Why should I turn away, but in delicacy to your embarrassment. And you had as many consolers as defenders."

"Then you really did not turn away in disgust?"

"Certainly not!"

"And you do not think me changed?"

"No, save in one particular; I do hope that you are changed in that."

"I understand, and hope it too, though I shall not be half as amusing and popular. Then you think of me as you did?"

"Only more highly; and now I think you can ask no more questions."

"Yes, one more. What do you think of Ermiston?"

The question was abrupt;—no wonder Katharine felt embarrassed.

"You do not answer now as promptly as you did before. Do not by praising him mar the perfection of your former speech. I told you that we were not friends, and that I would not willingly yield up my idolship to him."

"You were in jest that evening."

"More in earnest. Did I not describe him truly?"

"You caricatured his fastidiousness;" she said, after some hesitation.

"Scarcely; but you are unwilling to admit a fault."

"This is nonsense!—all have faults," she replied with quickness.

"Will you condemn him for his conduct this evening? Though unmarked by others,

you should have felt that unfeeling triumph lurked beneath his cold politeness."

"Lord Ermiston judged it more pleasing to your feelings, that the subject should be changed, rather than discussed;" she answered hurriedly.

"You cannot quite acquit, Miss Darrell, but you would fain excuse him;—he should be grateful—very grateful;—I should be so, were I the Earl."

He spoke with bitterness; and rose abruptly. Mr. Bell marked his annoyance, and joined him when beyond Katharine's hearing.

"You are a wise man, Sir Herbert. You do, what few men can, make wise resolves—and keep them."

"Mr. Bell, there has been more than enough of this for to-night, at least: I have done wrong—and I have been rebuked. Let those who have never broken their resolutions

each throw a stone. Think you that I should have a splendid cairn?"

"I should not aid in the accumulation," replied Mr. Bell more kindly, self rebuked.

"But you mistake; I meant not to speak of the slips of the tongue, but the changes of the heart. I would ask if Sir Herbert Eustace holds the feelings of a brother towards Katharine Darrell as he has been trying to persuade the world—and himself?"

"And by what right would you ask?"

"I would satisfy my thirst for knowledge."

"Thirst for knowledge! You would arm yourself with sharper weapons—you would inflict more deadly wounds.—You have played the Indian as it is, and I edge not your tomahawk—place not my scalp within your hands;—you have tortured and triumphed already."

"Triumphed? Yes: for I am better and worse than men think me," muttered the cynic looking after the Baronet who had turned away as he finished speaking.

A few moments more and this morose being was seated by Katharine; and strange to say, whilst he constantly mocked at her fresh, warm feelings, saying that they could not last, he as constantly sought her society; and when beside her, showed a nearer approach to kindness than he exhibited at any other time.

"You are wrong, Miss Darrell: these two colours are not alike. It is to be hoped you have a clearer perception of shades in character than in worsted."

"I do not boast of being very discriminating in either," she replied, changing the colour without looking up.

"A humble appreciation of your powers in this respect might save you pain; but I doubt if your humility exceeds your know-

ledge. Fascinated by harmony of tone, and grace of manner, you perceive not a deficiency in energy—a want of moral courage. You close your eyes against every token of an over sensitiveness to ridicule, veiled beneath the more graceful cloak of a fastidious taste. You will not understand that pride and weakness fashion a character, which however seemingly amiable in many other points, is not such as to repay the devotion of a woman's love; and that woman Katharine Darrell. A strong mind will make itself known; and where all is perfect harmony, no unmodulated tone, no sudden and impulsive movement, no springing into action, there is art, and that may not be trusted:—or there is over-refinement, wasted powers, a trivial mind, without a noble aim;—or there is weakness, which fears ridicule—a moral cowardice; or there is mediocrity that cannot rise above the common herd—that dares not dare:—that may pass unnoted in prosperitv, but whose powers rise

not in adversity. Such should not be throned in woman's heart!—He is not worthy woman's tender, self-denying love, whom a sneer will change—a laugh will part;—he will be found wanting—he will stand aloof, when the faint heart turns to him for consolation. Woe to you, Katharine Darrell! woe to you especially if you trust such. You cannot always tread on flowers; choose one who can, and will smooth down a rugged path. The gilded vessel, the child's plaything, rides gaily on a glassy sea:—but life is not a glassy sea:—the storm must come! If you would reach the peaceful port, embark not in a summer yacht:—select a ship that can abide the storm—a mind that can maintain its course—that struggles—and will conquer. Look there," he continued, for she made no reply, taking up a highly finished drawing from the table. the performance of Miss Banham, showing more pains than genius, and contrasting it with a bold free sketch which lay beside it,

whole! Without the possibility of a
ment too:—deficient in energy:—not a
line: and were such put it would be
place—it would spoil the keeping. Now
on this! A bold and vigorous outline
work of mind, seizing the attention:
not manner: thought, not mechanism
may be filled up ill; but it may also be fill
well:—there is the capability of greatne
there may be faults in the petty detail
the whole will compel admiration, an
weary in the survey. This other make
yawn. Better choose the bold, the fran
generous, with all his faults; he may be
unthinking, wasting the powers whose

"The tastes of your sex, and of ours differ: you naturally prefer the bold and grand, we the gentle and the graceful;" she replied, treating the question as indifferently as she could, and shunning the scrutiny of her inquisitor.

"I said it could not last, and that Katharine Darrell would soon learn worldly ways—how to deceive, just as thousands have done before," he remarked, in a tone that sent the blood to her brows. "Did I not say that your humility was less than you pretended? Do you doubt at this moment that you read character correctly? Do you not expect to deceive me by this show of indifference, this turning an individual feeling into a general question? You are fast losing the guilelessness of the child, and acquiring the wiliness of the woman."

Katharine made no reply to his sarcasms; and rather mollified by her silence, which he

construed into an admission of error, he spoke less harshly, when he next addressed her.

"What did you say to vex Sir Herbert Eustace?"

"Is he vexed? I am very sorry," she replied with a frankness, which could not be doubted.

"You are only half a woman yet," he remarked, with something like a smile; "and I suppose I must not tempt you wholly to enact the character by insisting on knowing what you said:—but what think you of going to console him? He has had much to annoy him to-night. See! there he is, turning over print after print, not knowing all the time, whether he is looking at Pekin or Petersburgh. Something you said with, or without intention has annoyed him."

"Indeed! Then I will go and say I am sorry for it: his own frankness deserves the same from others."

She rose as she spoke, taking her work which she had completed.

"Poor child! that warm heart must suffer much:" was Mr. Bell's thought, as his eyes followed her across the room.

Who would have believed that the cynic could feel pity?

Sir Herbert continued to turn over the prints without appearing to notice the approach of Katharine, who stood beside him some moments in silence, so stern, so determined not to be appeased did he look. It may appear strange to some that when she did speak it was to make a request, and not an apology. Strange?—it was the tact of a gentle heart, wise in its kindness; it was less embarrassing to herself and to him: once engage an offended person to do you a favor, however slight, and the reconciliation is half effected. It shows that you are not too proud to be obliged: it gives your foe the pride of obliging.

"Will you be kind enough to hand me that basket, Sir Herbert, that I may put away Mrs. Banham's work?"

The basket was handed without a reply, and his neither starting nor looking up at the request proved his knowledge of her presence. This was discouraging:—she hesitated a moment; and then spoke with her usual frankness, though her manner was slightly embarrassed.

"Having granted one request will you not grant another? Will you not forgive me if I have said any thing to vex you? Believe me, if I have so done, it was unintentional. I could not mean to hurt you, who have been so kind: and my words were badly chosen if they did not convince you how truly I have felt with, and for you throughout the evening."

Sir Herbert, starting up, looked keenly at her as she half turned away.

"Would you indeed be pained to grieve me?" he demanded quickly.

"Yes, much grieved. Will you forgive me?"

"No, sweet Katharine; I have nothing to forgive. I only was to blame; and should sue for pardon for my churlishness."

Katharine looked grave, as she withdrew the hand which he had taken: she felt annoyed at his gratitude, though she knew not why.

Mr. Hensworth's approach prevented further conversation.

"I told you wrong it seems, Sir Herbert. Walker is still in England, and Johnston, who has just arrived, hints at a probable meeting between him and young Stephens, who considers his sister has been ill used."

"Good Heavens! If my worse than folly should cause death!" exclaimed the Baronet, turning pale. "Where are they to meet?"

"Of course nothing is known for certain, but probably at Merton Green, the duelling ground of this part of the county. Words

passed between the young men to-day in the high street at S———, where Stephens is staying with his aunt; and the meeting may take place to-morrow morning, or not at all."

"Then there is no time to lose. If man can prevent it, it shall be prevented."

"You can scarcely be in time."

"It must be attempted. By riding all night, and cutting across the country, I may reach Merton Green by six. Good bye, Miss Darrell! I am sure of your prayers for my success."

"Stop, Sir Herbert!" exclaimed Mrs. Banham and her youngest daughter, who as well as Katharine had overheard Mr. Hensworth's startling communication. "It is raining furiously, and the cross roads are dangerous. Pray send your servant with a letter."

"Send my servant with a letter!" he repeated indignantly, turing from them. "There is little danger; but were there more, my life

is fairly forfeited for putting theirs in peril."

"Tell my servant to saddle Saladin as quick as possible; I shall be in the stable before he is ready," was his order to the footman he met in the hall, as he proceeded to his own apartment.

And he was in the stable as he had said, prepared for his ride, before Saladin was ready, though he had delayed to write a line of explanation to young Stephens, which his servant was to take to S——— by the regular road, and deliver with all speed, lest Merton Green should not be the place appointed.

Sir Herbert spared neither himself nor his good horse; but Merton Green was only reached as the distant village clock struck six. The storm had passed—the rain had ceased — and he could distinguish through the morning mist four figures busy with arrangements.

The pistols were in the hands of the combatants, as, springing from his jaded, stumbling horse, he rushed towards them. The signal was given, but, ere either could fire, Sir Herbert threw himself before young Stephens, covering him with his own person, whilst he dashed the weapon from his hand.

Walker's pistol went off in his surprise, and the ball passing through Sir Herbert's coat slightly grazed his side.

"What is the meaning of all this?" enquired all the gentlemen at once.

"This is the meaning. Miss Stephens is worthy of your love, Walker; my tale was but a foolish jest," said the Baronet, scarcely able to stand from the fatigue he had undergone.

"A foolish jest! And you could play with my feelings? sport with my agony?" exclaimed the lover.

"A foolish jest! And to the discredit of

my sister?" exclaimed the brother. "You must answer for this."

Sir Herbert's colour came and went.

"If you mean, Mr. Stephens, that, because I have wronged the sister by my folly, I should seek the life of the brother, I tell you plainly that I will do no such thing. I have suffered too much during my hasty ride, from the dread of having blood on my hands unwittingly, to become a murderer wilfully. I will give any explanation—make any apology—publish any declaration, consistent with truth, to clear your sister:—not because you will demand it, but as a voluntary act of justice to Miss Stephens. When I have cleared her fame to her lover, her brother, and the whole world: when I have seen the lover and the brother shake hands as friends, as I trust I shall, I am ready to be shot at, if it so please you; but seek the life of either will I not: I have done too much wrong already. You may

speak of me as you choose; I have done evil, and must bear the penalty; but be speedy in your questions, for I am faint with fatigue, and my head grows dizzy."

There was a moment's silence of surprise, and doubt; then the lover held out his hand with broken, but friendly words; and the brother took it with the same. They would then have questioned Sir Herbert, but Sir Herbert was unable to reply: his head grew more dizzy—his limbs, cramped by his long ride, could no longer support him—the blood welled gently out of the wound in his side; and he must have fallen but for the seconds, who, less personally interested than the principals, and struck by the Baronet's noble frankness had fixed their attention more earnestly upon him.

It was several days before Sir Herbert Eustace returned to Sallowfield; and even then he looked pale and ill, notwithstanding

the nursing of the Stephenses', to whose house he had been taken, and who, delighted with his readiness to bear all blame himself, rather than suffer any to rest on others, would not permit him to depart till nearly restored to health. Even the lovers forgave all the misery he had caused them, and looked upon him as a friend. Here too he learned that Mr. Cooper had pursued and brought back his daughter; and the parent himself was scarcely more rejoiced at the event.

Loud and numerous were the congratulations and expressions of pleasure on his reappearance at Sallowfield. Katharine said the least, but her cordial shaking of the hand, and the tears in her eyes were dearer to him than the words of all the rest. His pale cheek glowed—his dim eye danced in light;—but the cheek paled, and the eye dimmed again, before the evening closed. He saw Lord Ermiston pick up a flower that she had dropped

as she listened to those few low wor
the pleasure of their meeting was dest

CHAPTER VII.

"With lips that were silent, but blushes that spoke."

Moore.

"*Adieu ma chère maman.* I am in a wild mood this morning, but will try and compose myself before I begin your sketch, which you must be sure and admire very much," cried the happy Katharine, flinging back a playful kiss of the hand to Mrs. Arnold as she left the room.

The grounds at Sallowfield were pretty, and

her step was light and buoyant, yet timid too; and her colour came and went at the rustling of a leaf, or the flitting of a bird. She sat before the bridge which was to form the principal object in her sketch—arranged her drawing materials, and began to measure the distances with her eye; but gradually that eye marked less and less of the scene around:—the slight flurry in her manner passed away, and Kate sank into a deep but happy reverie. The rich notes of a blackbird on a neighbouring spray struck at length on her dulled ear:—her lips parted with a sunny smile; and when the woodland lay had ceased, the graceful girl took up the strain in a spirit of playful rivalry, after glancing round with a blush to assure herself that she was still alone.

The words and air were simple; but she gave them all the spell of feeling.

*KATHARINE'S SONG.

My dwelling is no lordly hall—
I rule no wide domain:
No bending servants wait my call,
No flatterers swell my train.
But roses twine around my home,
Bright smiles my presence greet;
The woodland wild is mine to roam—
Mine summer's odours sweet.

No costly diamonds deck my hair,
No cloth of gold have I;
But gorgeous robes and jewels rare
Stay not the sad heart's sigh.
Those gems might bind an aching brow—
There is no pain in mine;—
Red gold might win a faithless vow,
And I be left to pine.

The echo of her clear, sweet tones had scarcely died away, ere blushing a deeper blush at her idle mood, and snatching up her pencil, she began to sketch with the resolute

* Mr. Balfe has very successfully adapted this Song to a charming Melody.

manner of one resolved to be no longer turned aside from her purpose by the wandering thoughts, which had hitherto stayed her hand.

"You have chosen a good day for sketching, Miss Darrell," observed Sir Herbert Eustace, looking over that young lady's shoulder.

Katharine started, not having been aware of his presence; but made no reply, not being exactly pleased with his tone.

He took his seat beside her, and continued.

"A very good day you have chosen; there is so much light and shade, just like life; it requires variety to make a picture interesting, and something the same in a character; uniformity in either borders on insipidity. Do you not think so?"

"Certainly; a picture without light and shade could only please a Chinese."

"And character—do you not agree with me in that too?"

"The principle may be carried too far in morals:—deep shadows would be more pleasing in pictures than in characters;—but I am too much taken up with my sketch just at present to think of these things. Is the perspective of that bridge correct?"

The question changed his manner: he was pleased at this appeal for his advice, though doubtful whether it was not a woman's *ruse* to avoid an embarrassing subject.

"Not quite: that one stroke should be carried to the point of distance, not the point of sight. Yes, just so:—that is quite right now."

"Thank you: it is a great improvement."

"Would you but apply to me in all things, as you have done in this, I should be blest indeed."

Katharine continued her drawing in silence; but the tree on the paper did not bear much resemblance to that near the stream.

"Will you not apply to me thus?" he repeated.

"You would find me troublesome," she answered quickly.

"I should not find you troublesome; and you know it. Will you trust to me through life in weightier matters, as you have done in this trifle?"

"No, no: I am growing into a woman now; and must learn to judge for myself."

"Yet you admit the correctness of my judgment?"

"In this drawing," she replied; too much fluttered by his manner to know precisely what she said.

"And in nothing but this drawing?"

She was silent.

"How may I interpret this silence? Does it mean that you will rely on me in other points?"

"No—that is not in all."

"Not in all!—In what will you trust me then?"

She looked annoyed; but, after a short pause, answered playfully.

"I will not trouble you on any points; but try and walk alone:—the child is always so very proud of showing that it can dispense with leading strings."

"But when those leading strings are held by one who loves, and is beloved?"

"Some children are wayward; and prefer walking alone," she replied more gravely.

"Alone? Quite alone?" he questioned.

Her cheek crimsoned; and, vexed at his pertinacity, she spoke a little proudly.

"Of course: there is a great charm in independence."

"A greater in sincerity," he answered pointedly. "Man may revel in independence; but not woman:—gentle, confiding, woman."

"You may be mistaken: we are not as fond of leading strings as you imagine."

"I am not mistaken: the difference rests in the holders of the leading strings, as you persist in calling them; remember, I gave not the name."

"Undoubtedly: if one cannot walk alone, the grand point is to choose one's guide; that privilege, at least, is accorded to poor, feeble woman."

"And I am not the guide you would select?"

"Not exactly."

"Not exactly!" he repeated with some warmth. "Why not say no at once; and add that the one whom you would select does not at all resemble me?"

"I did not wish to appear rude."

"Rude! I thank you for the consideration; but never again let a thought of my feelings check an honest answer. Perhaps you would favor me by describing the person of your choice? You do not speak:—are words too poor to tell his worth? Still silent! Shall I

point him out? Is not that the chosen guide —there—there on that bridge?"

Katharine looked up:—Lord Ermiston was crossing the stream. She felt the Baronet's keen gaze upon her; and blushing and confused bent lower over her drawing.

"You make no answer. Surely Miss Darrell does not blush for her choice?"

"Miss Darrell blushes for Sir Herbert Eustace, who can thus pain a simple girl to please a wayward humour."

"Simple girl!" he repeated, but not so harshly as before, a little shamed by her rebuke. "I will not be so cruel as to compel an answer: I can interpret silence; and will spare your blushes.—So; in spite of all your promises, you place the Earl above the Baronet. You do wisely, and worldlings will applaud you; yet the time of repentance may come. He is not what you think him—he may not play the tyrant, but your warm heart will feel a chill. Now you love—hereafter you

may despise:—he is the world's minion—the very slave of custom, and of ridicule."

"If you will persist in seeking to entertain me, Sir Herbert Eustace, I must request you to select some more pleasing subject: I am no admirer of detraction, and your avowed enmity to your cousin unfits you to become his judge."

"Ha! what a proud glance and stately mien! And yet you would have me think you but a girl. Ermiston should be proud!—very proud!—for the first time in my life I would change with him. That woman said our hopes would cross—and they have crossed!—but they will scarce do so again. You have chosen, and will abide your choice. Good morning! I am no mean rival to interrupt a *tête-à-tête*."

He turned aside as he concluded, forcing his way through the interwoven boughs that crashed before him. In his wrath, there was a fierce pleasure in trampling upon something:

he knew not till his cousin proved his successful rival how much that cousin was detested.

Katharine had not recovered her composure when Lord Ermiston joined her: perhaps his presence, and his words did not lessen her confusion; yet she did not complain—she did not bid him depart—and when they crossed the lawn two hours afterwards, though her hand rested on his arm more lightly and more timidly than it had ever rested there before; and though her eyes were bent upon the ground, the spell of happiness was on her, and many wondered why she looked so beautiful.

Never had Sir Herbert been in higher spirits than on this evening:—never had he raised louder laughs, or won more general applause. Mr. Bell stared, rebuked; then shook his head, and was silent; whilst Katharine, though thinking much of another, shrank from his almost boisterous mirth, and the strange brightness in his eye. Miss Banham had too

severe a head-ache to leave her room; and Lord Ermiston never quitted Katharine's side, except to converse with Mrs. Arnold.

"Dear child! how I rejoice in your hopes of happiness!" said Mrs. Arnold as Katharine embraced her before retiring for the night. "Lord Ermiston is all I could desire. He stopped me at once when I would have told him how you came into my care, declaring that he knew all; and he has kindly, most kindly, promised that we shall be much together. I am so selfish, I could not bear to part with you entirely."

"You selfish! my dear, my more than mother! How can you say so? Why should we part?" throwing her arms around her. "We will all live together."

"No, Katharine, that cannot be. I know some little of the world, and will not risk your happiness by the attempt: but we may still be much together."

"Always together! I never thought of this:

—we will not part. You have been more than mother—loving me with more than a mother's love. No! no! I will not leave you," she exclaimed, clinging round her with a burst of tears.

"Hush! hush! you love Lord Ermiston!"

"Y—e—s:—but I love you too. How shall I leave you? Will you not be sad when you have not your Kate, your own dear Kate to smile upon and love?"

"I shall indeed, dear child; but still it must be so."

"No, it shall not be so. If he loves me, as he says, he will love you too, and not ask me to give up her who has nursed me from my childhood until now for one known but a few weeks."

Mrs. Arnold was deeply moved; but she knew, as she said, too much of the world to yield to Kate's entreaties.

"Speak, Katharine; you have never yet

told me an untruth. Do you think years would make you love him more?"

"I could not love him more," she said, hiding her blushes on the shoulder of her protectress. Mrs. Arnold smiled a chastened smile; for she thought of her own young days, and of him who was in the grave.

"Should you love him less had he no rank, or wealth? Would you as readily share with him a lowly, as a splendid lot?"

"Dear mother, what have I said or done that you should ask me such a question? Can you think that I should prize him less if he were poor? And can you think I heed his title?"

"I do not think it, Katharine; so you need not look reproachfully," said Mrs. Arnold, kissing her. "Yours is a simple mind and noble heart—you do not count as the world counts. Would that it might ever be the same! Would that I could ever shield you from sorrow, and deceit!"

"What do you mean, dear mother? People tell me of the world as if it were a desert full of terrors, and wild beasts; or worse, of cold and changing hearts: and look at me and shake their heads, and talk of sorrow;—yet I have ever been so happy. Where are these selfish beings of whom all complain? Every one is kind to Kate."

"I hope it will be ever so; or that a knowledge of what man can be may steal upon you with a gentle tread, not rush upon you with a shock. Yours is a sunny mind and grateful heart. You will strive to smile away your sorrows if they come; forget the evil done you, and double kindness by your gratitude."

"I cannot think of sorrow: I am so happy to be loved by you—and him:—and we will never part."

Mrs. Arnold shook her head.

"Only in name then," kissing her fondly.

Mrs. Arnold yielded to the charm of her caresses; she saw that the grateful girl whilst

unconsciously possessed by a new and powerful feeling, had never contemplated a separation from the guardian of her childhood, and she would not pain her then by continuing the discussion, but bade her go to rest—to happy rest—with kisses and fond words.

And Kate's rest that night was happy—very happy;—not quite as calm as in her days of childhood, but, if broken—still her dreams were brighter. Her heart was not as peaceful as of old; but then it was a treasury of beautiful and precious things; rich hopes, and thoughts, and feelings, only needing order and arrangement:—time would bring these.

Happy! happy Kate! How long may all this last? How often will you sink to rest rich in such blissful hopes, the words of praise and gratitude upon your lips? How often will you rise to find those hopes fulfilled?

"Ask not! Ask not! Why raise the future's veil?
The sun must set—its glory must grow pale."—

"How is your head-ache, Maria?" asked Mrs. Banham entering her daughter's room before she sought her own.

"Better, mamma. Did Lord Ermiston appear distressed?"

"I saw no symptom of distress," replied the mother drily.

"Perhaps not;—and particularly to you;—he has learnt to check and conceal emotion. How did he employ himself all the evening?"

"In playing the agreeable, I might almost say the lover, to Katharine Darrell," remarked her sister entering the room at the moment, evidently in no happy mood.

"Psha! Charlotte, you never will see Lord Ermiston's regard for me, but persist in fancying lover like *dévoirs* to Katharine, to get her out of the way of the Baronet."

"You may spare this pettishness, Maria, and rather blame your own blind vanity. If Charlotte, saw lover-like attentions, she saw

no more than the truth. Katharine Darrell is to be Lady Ermiston."

"That shall she not!" almost shouted Maria, forgetting in her anger, her usual suavity of tone and manner; springing from the bed, and standing before her mother with a look bordering upon frenzy.

"You need not look so strangely upon me, Maria: it is none of my doing;—I warned you of the danger."

"Yes, but it is your doing," she replied stamping her delicate foot upon the floor. "To procure your darling son a rich wife, you have marred your daughter's fortunes; had the girl's real birth been known, Lord Ermiston would not have thought of her. George will lose his bride:—that is some comfort!"

"A great comfort, certainly, to have all the children beggars as well as the parents," retorted Mrs. Banham, with kindling ire. "Pray Charlotte how are you getting on with

the Baronet? There wants but that scheme to fail: and the ruin will be complete."

"Perhaps I too have to thank your partiality towards your son for the destruction of my hopes. I doubt if the girl, with all her pretended simplicity, has not crossed me too; playing off the Baronet against the Earl, till she has secured the latter. He had taken more wine than usual to-night; or was in an extraordinary mood, though I believe few but myself guessed that his spirits were forced. He is evidently angry with Katharine, but I tried in vain to turn his pique to my profit. He has just declared his intention of returning to Eustace Park to-morrow, though I urged his stay. He talked of business, but I do not believe him. Others thought him paying me unusual attention, I knew better and liked not his manner; but playing on his pique he may yet be mine:—many a hand is won through wounded vanity."

"Are you certain that Lord Ermiston is

Katharine's lover?" asked Maria willing to hear hope.

"He is her accepted lover, as I learn from Mrs. Arnold, who is of course delighted," replied Mrs. Banham.

"She shall not be his," exclaimed Maria. Her tone was lower than before, but still more resolved.

"She shall not be his!" repeated her mother with a calmer manner, but a mind as decided. "Till to-day I knew not the girl's real birth; it is even lower than I thought. Lord Ermiston proud, sensitive, fastidious, will never brook the exposure with which a puppet, deeming herself a free agent, shall enlighten him. Mrs. Arnold believes him acquainted with the truth—I do not. His haughty mother will interfere should his own pride be bowed by love; and if he show but the slightest doubt or hesitation, my old friend and her pet beggar will free him from the engagement before he can request it."

"I doubt their being so scrupulous;" remarked her eldest daughter.

"You judge all others like yourself Maria; but Katharine Darrell does not resemble you."

If there was a sneer in the mother's words, quiet as was the tone, the daughter did not reply to it, and Mrs. Banham continued.

"You must still treat the girl as a sister. Our wish for the union, after a disclosure of the truth, will appear more generous; and Mrs. Arnold must see the wisdom of the measure; whilst George will not object to her birth in consideration of her wealth."

"George object!" observed Charlotte contemptously.

"You will do as I advise," observed the mother pointedly.

CHAPTER VIII.

"My daughter! oh my daughter!"
Campbell.

HAPPY as had been her rest, Katharine rose early;—rose with the gladsome feeling of a young bird, that still tended by a loving mother, cares not for the future, but joys without fear in its new acquirement of flying, skimming through the air with a fluttering delight unknown before.

Lord Ermiston, unloverlike, found fault with her sketch of the day before; and then, loverlike, persuaded her to let him escort her

to the spot, that the mistake might be rectified. Katharine must have been very stupid that day, or his Lordship must have been fastidious, concerning the alteration; or both must have been otherwise employed—it was so long before the Earl and his fair companion prepared to return to the house.

There are some who maintain that no alteration had been made, the tree remaining as before; but we shall not repeat the scandal, being very particular to discountenance any thing approaching to malice—as all gossips are.

Not walking against time, they had proceeded but a short distance on their return before they encountered nearly all the other visitors at Sallowfield, including some morning callers and Mrs. Arnold, and the Baronet, bent on a visit to a fancy cottage building on a common just without the grounds. Mrs. Banham so strongly urged their joining the party, that she might have the benefit of his

Lordship's taste, that denial was out of the question.

"What can all those boys be shouting and laughing at?" asked one of the foremost of the walkers, pointing to a riotous group of children a little way in advance on the common.

"I fancy it must be the mad woman I met yesterday," replied Mr. Hensworth. "I wish you had been with me, Sir Herbert; you would have made a capital story out of her fantastic dress, and ridiculous vanity, though you could not have been more amusing than you were last night. You seemed absolutely possessed with a wicked spirit of mirth and mischief, and I suppose are doing repentance to-day, for you are as dull as an owl at noon."

"My feverish mood last night was no good sign. I find I have not recovered from the effects of my late attack; and must be more prudent," replied the Baronet, skilfully hiding any appearance of vexation at the remark.

"You do look ill I must say. Oh! here comes the crazy woman with her court, as she calls the shouting children. Now we shall have capital fun!"

"Talking of crazy women, who was your mother, Miss Darrell?" asked the very curious and candid Mrs. Bampton.

"*A propos* of bread," remarked Mr. Hensworth with a laugh, in which several joined, so singular and abrupt appeared the question.

If Mrs. Bampton had intended to confuse and annoy her to whom she spoke, and such was generally supposed to be the reason of her plain questions, she certainly only accomplished her purpose in a very minor degree, as far as Katharine was concerned:—startled and surprised she was; but, at the moment, nothing more. So many years had passed since she had seen her real mother, of whom she had but a slight recollection; and she had so long been accustomed to consider Mrs. Arnold in that light, that she was on the point of answer-

ing the question as if put in reference to her, without considering the folly of so doing, that lady herself being present, and well known to Mrs. Bampton, when a second question changed her intended reply.

"Who was your real mother I mean,—not Mrs. Arnold; I know she took you out of charity."

"I have no mother; she has been dead many years."

"But what was she, when she was alive? I ask."

It was then, that in her difficulty to frame an answer, Katharine first began to comprehend the annoyance of the question. Mrs. Arnold had understood it from the first, and pale and trembling looked from her favorite to Lord Ermiston, on whose arm she was leaning. Yet even now Kate did not fully apprehend all, or even a small portion of what that question might bring upon her; she did not distinctly know what her mother had been,

Mrs. Arnold having always avoided the subject; whilst her seclusion had not only saved her from unfeeling taunts, which she might have encountered had she mingled with other children; but had also prevented her forming a proper estimate of what would be the opinion of the world, were all the circumstances of her birth revealed. She felt some little awkwardness at admitting her mother's lowly station, a few gleams of worldly knowledge having broken in upon her since her residence at Sallowfield; but her principal objection to answering the question was the fear of displeasing her protectress, remembering her request the night before their departure from Beechen Cliff. She looked to Mrs. Arnold before she replied, and, observing her vexation, answered less openly than she might otherwise have done, thus giving many reason to think that she was anxious to deceive, and, among this number Lord Ermiston, who was

not aware that she believed him acquainted with every particular.

"I was so very young, when I last saw my mother, that I can scarcely recal her to my mind; and only know how much, how very much I owe dear Mrs. Arnold."

Her look of gratitude as she turned towards that lady was so beautiful, so touching, that Lord Ermiston forgot for a moment the mortification which Mrs. Bampton's question had occasioned him. What was your mother? was not the question he could have desired asked of the future Lady Ermiston:—but he had far ruder shocks to sustain.

"If you do not remember her looks, Miss Darrell, I suppose you can tell whether she was a crazy gipsy pauper, as the story goes. I ask that I may contradict the report."

Mrs. Arnold marked the Earl's start, and changing cheek; and feared for her darling's happiness. If he knew all, as he had said,

why that start? But then Katharine had started too at such a very candid statement of a disagreeable fact, which had certainly not been glossed to suit the taste of the fastidious.

"Katharine knows nothing of her mother, not having seen her since she was seven years old," interposed Mrs. Arnold, before her favorite could reply.

"But you know all about her, I suppose."

"I never saw her mother but once: she has been long dead."

"Very likely: but was her mother called crazy Nan?" demanded the pertinacious Mrs. Bampton.

"Who says Nan Darrell is crazy? She is no more crazy than yourself," exclaimed a voice, startling from its singular tone.

All turned to gaze on the speaker.—It was the attraction of the noisy children, who had approached unremarked, the attention of the party having been taken up with Mrs. Bamp-

ton's questions:—it was the crazy woman whom Mr. Hensworth had seen the day before, and from whom he anticipated such fun:—it was Nan Darrell herself! recognised on the instant by Mrs. Arnold, though not by Kate.

"Nan Darrell, and alive! My poor Katharine!" exclaimed Mrs. Arnold trembling for her favorite's fate, and too much overcome by the woman's sudden appearance to think of the most prudent course to be pursued.

"Nan Darrell alive? To be sure! Who said she was dead? Oh, is that you? I know you now, ma'am," cried the crazy creature dropping courtesy after courtesy with a manner so singularly ridiculous; such an extraordinary compound of humility, assumed dignity, and self conceit, holding out her party-colored gown as she did so, that even Mrs. Arnold, amid all her distress, could hardly suppress a smile, whilst the laughs of some of

the Sallowfield guests were audible; and the mirth of the children, who had followed in her train, became uproarious."

"What are you all laughing at?" questioned the poor creature angrily, yet with a ludicrous assumption of dignity, which she rarely forgot. "Did you never see one lady courtesy to another before? Learn manners from me. And how do you do ma'am?" speaking to Mrs. Arnold. "I have not seen you a long time, and was thinking of paying you a visit. See, I have put on a handsome dress on purpose, hearing that Kate was going to be married. A handsome gown you see," she continued, spreading out her dress, a flaring red and yellow calico, not over clean, and turning round with the most self satisfied air.

A shout of laughter followed this display of her finery, which she endeavoured to hush by an angry wave of the hand.

"So you thought I was dead. No, no: Nan Darrell can't die yet; not till her child is

a lady," affecting a mysterious whisper. "But where is Kate? I want to congratulate her as we grand people say. Which is little Kate of all these pretty ladies?"

Involuntarily all the rest drew back, leaving Katharine foremost; who pale, trembling, and shrinking from her crazy mother's silly vanity, and frenzied look, clung to Lord Ermiston for support, a support scarcely granted, yet not quite withheld; though every fresh display of his intended mother-in-law's folly, and the succeeding merriment were mental tortures which he could ill endure. At that very moment, with that fair, and fragile being clinging to him in the full, undoubting confidence of a first attachment, he thought not of her misery, but only of the ridicule to which he should be subjected.

"Is that woman really your mother?" he demanded almost sternly.

"I believe so;" faltered Katharine, still clinging to him.

He accused her in his own heart of deception:—he would have withdrawn his arm, and retired from a scene so painful to his sensitive pride; but, without understanding his feelings, she looked up in his face, with a trusting, yet pleading glance, which he could not quite resist. He still let her cling to his arm; but he looked stern and proud the while, with his teeth set, and his cheek pale, speaking no word of consolation or endearment.

"Her mother? To be sure I am Kate's mother. Who says I am not?" cried crazy Nan dancing up to his Lordship, who drew back in disgust. "So you are the great Lord who is to marry Kate. Well, you are a fine, grand man," she continued, eyeing him from head to foot: "and a handsome one—look like a king:—but what an ugly waistcoat! So dull! Why don't you have one like this?" holding out her gown. "I will give you one just like it the day you marry Kate," sidling

closer to him; "but you must look better tempered: you seem sulky now."

Lord Ermiston stamped his foot, and half withdrew his arm from the clinging Kate: rarely had his features exhibited such an expression of rage, as when an almost universal shout of laughter at the crazy woman's patronising manner met his ear.

Poor Katharine saw his stamp, and felt the half withdrawal of his arm. She raised her drooping head, and looked up in his face:—for one moment only did she look upon him, yet, brief as was that look, the colour passed even from her lips as she gazed:—a slight shiver shook her frame—her head drooped again, and her hands unclasping his arm slowly and sadly sank by her side. She did not upbraid by look or word—she did not even turn away; but she left him free to leave her:—she did not ask his pity, save by her pallid cheek, and gentle submission to his

will. He could not see her thus unmoved;—but he stood irresolute, half turned away, looking on the ground in silence.

Nan Darrell saw not this desertion of her daughter, it not being sufficiently marked to attract her attention, and continued her wild talk inflicting at every word a deeper pang.

"You will soon be a lady, Kate. I always said you would:—and you ought to be, though James said you should not. But I knew it would be: my mother could tell fortunes, and she told it. You will be a great lady, and ride in a coach, and wear a fine dress like mine. And I am a lady too—a lady in my own light—so I'll teach you how to behave. Mind now, do as I do:" spreading out her gown, and tossing her head; "but don't be familiar with the people—keep yourself up. I'll be sure to be at your wedding; but you must have a gay dress like mine. I'll send you one; and a hat the same as this," pointing to her own blue and yellow bonnet, with a pink

feather. "Always dress smart as I do, and then the people will follow you. How white and ill you look, poor child; not half so pretty as you used to do; but perhaps ladies should look so. You must be married soon, for I am going away: I am wanted; but I'll see you a lady first. Mother said I should die then—and sometimes I think so too," she added with a sad and mysterious look. Then, resuming her folly, she continued; "You shall have a long train, and I'll hold it—but no—ain't I a lady too?"

"She is fainting:—she cannot endure this trial:—it will kill her! Will you still be her protector? Or do you desert her in her agony and leave her to my care?" asked Sir Herbert Eustace of his cousin, in a tone too low for other ears, occupied in listening to the crazy ravings of Nan Darrell.

Starting at the appeal, Lord Ermiston looked keenly at his cousin, whose words and manner confirmed a suspicion which had once before

been awakened. He made no reply, but turned irresolute to Katharine;—he saw her sinking to the earth—and was decided.

His arm was round her, ere she fell; all but his love was forgotten: "Katharine! dear Katharine!" he exclaimed, alarmed at her deathly look.

The drooping lids were half unclosed—the lips moved; a low soft sound was heard, sweet to a lover's ears—they were the look and tones of grateful, trusting affection:—all her doubts were gone—he was unchanged!

The eye lids drooped again, and the lips closed; but the features no longer wore a look of pain.

"Take her to that cottage, Ermiston," said Sir Herbert abruptly.

The Earl bore her towards the house, followed by Mrs. Arnold and the Banhams, whilst the Baronet hurried on before to prepare the owner for the visit: and then dis-

persed the women and children, who had crowded round poor crazy Nan.

"You had better leave Miss Darrell to our care; we women are used to fainting fits, and your presence on her first recovery, might agitate her," observed Miss Banham to Lord Ermiston, motioning him to retire, after he had placed Katharine in a large chair in an inner room.

His Lordship hesitated an instant, then moved towards the door.

The Baronet caught Miss Banham's eye as his cousin retired; and the colour rose and paled on her cheek as she turned away, busying herself in a hurried manner about the still insensible Katharine.

"Leave her not!" said Sir Herbert, "this is no common moment:—now is the time to prove yourself worthy of her regard."

The Earl paused at the low, earnest whisper:—he even made a step in return,

though galled at receiving advice from one whose generous conduct was a rebuke to his own selfish vacillation; but at that moment came the voice of crazy Nan from without boasting of her daughter being a lady, and the laugh which followed;—his cheek flushed at the sound;—and he left the room with a haughty step, not looking at his cousin as he passed.

Mrs. Arnold's distress aud agitation had hitherto prevented her taking a part in the painful scene: and even now as she assisted in restoring the sufferer, her tears fell, and her hand shook; she foresaw sorrow for her darling, and blamed herself as the cause.

"Will you keep that unhappy woman out of hearing, till Katharine shall be quite recovered?" was her earnest request to Sir Herbert, who leant against the door-way.

"Why do you ask me? Ermiston should do that—she has chosen him;"—replied the

Baronet bitterly, rousing himself from the reverie into which he had fallen.

Mrs. Arnold drew back, pained and abashed.

"Forgive me! What would you?" said Sir Herbert, repenting his harshness.

"I would have you act as towards a sister, as you once said."

"Sister!" repeated the Baronet almost fiercely.

"Poor Katharine! she will have much to bear, and she is young and gentle. Do not despise her? I only am to blame," pleaded Mrs. Arnold, unconscious of the pain she was inflicting, and concluding him only disgusted at her parentage.

"You are right!—she is young and gentle—and will have much to bear. I will do all I can; and do not you leave her."

And he did all he could; keeping away a crowd; quieting crazy Nan; nay even saving his cousin any fresh shock to his sensitive

pride, though wild passions were raging in his own heart all the while.

Katharine's first act when restored to consciousness was to cast a keen, yet hurried glance around. The one she looked for was not there, and she sank back disappointed; whilst Mrs. Arnold's face was turned away.

"He is not here, love; though not far off. I dare say he thought you might feel awkward in his presence, without some explanation," whispered Maria in the most endearing tone.

A crimson flush came up on the pale cheek of the poor girl. One look, one word of his, would have given her back life and strength as they had done before; but he was not there to smile upon, to speak to her. "He thought she might feel awkward in his presence without an explanation" she repeated to herself. Did he not love her then? did he despise her? She spoke not; but covered her face

with her hands that none might look upon her.

"My poor child!" said Mrs. Arnold almost timidly, fearing lest the sufferer might have some feeling like reproach towards herself, for having by her very doting love and care but made her a fitter mark for sorrow.

She injured Katharine by the thought.

"Dear mother,—more than mother! You will not love me less!" was the passionate exclamation of her favorite, followed by a gush of tears as she clung fondly round her.

"No, no; dear child! I only love you more."

"Lord Ermiston hopes Miss Darrell is better," said Miss Banham, returning from the outer room.

"Miss Darrell is better and thanks Lord Ermiston for his enquiries, replied the weeper, gazing for a moment on the messenger with a wild keenness, that made her shrink: then the face sank again on Mrs. Arnold's shoulder.

with a still more passionate burst of grief.

"Poor child! he does not deserve her;—to desert her at such a moment!" whispered Mrs. Banham to her daughter in the most compassionate of tones, and with the most compassionate of looks.

But though a whisper, the weeper heard it; and a wilder clinging to Mrs. Arnold proved that she had.

"Take me away! Take me home, dear mother," murmured the sufferer.

"Dear girl; I will send for the carriage," said Mrs. Banham, kissing Katharine's bowed neck as she passed to give her orders.

There was no need of orders, Mrs. Arnold's carriage was at the cottage door. Sir Herbert aware that it was waiting for its mistress on the other side of the common, had got rid of the riotous children by sending them thither to order its approach with a promise of reward on condition of their remaining away from the

cottage; and had moreover, persuaded nearly all the others of the party to proceed on their walk, that Katharine might be spared the encountering curious eyes; so that only his cousin, himself, and the pertinacious Mrs. Bampton, were in the outer room when Mrs. Banham entered; the candid lady ready to see, and say any thing—the Earl seated in a gloomy corner in no enviable state of mind. Crazy Nan was talking to Mr. Hensworth, and some others beyond earshot of those in the cottage; and the kind dame herself with two chubby children was bustling about in the back kitchen, with an occasional word of condolence to the Earl, much to his annoyance, on the pale looks of the young lady, and the vagaries of the crazy woman.

"Your carriage is at the door," said Mrs. Banham, returning to the inner room, and omitting to state from ignorance, thoughtlessness, or intention, who had procured its attendance.

"Will you go now, or wait a little, dear Katharine?" asked Mrs. Banham with the most soothing manner.

"Now, now, thank you! I am quite ready;" rising as she spoke, though still clinging to Mrs. Arnold for support.

Maria tied on her bonnet—Charlotte put on her shawl, with endearing looks and words—none could have been kinder.

By an involuntary impulse, Sir Herbert stepped forward to assist the invalid as soon as the opened door showed her slowly advancing, supported by Mrs. Arnold, and Mrs. Banham; but he checked himself abruptly, turning to his cousin, who had risen, yet seemed undecided as to offering his aid.

Poor Katharine! she felt that she was in the presence of him, who had so lately won her to admit her regard by his own repeated vows of never changing love. She dared not look up, as unable from emotion to proceed, she paused for an instant:—no hurried step

approached—no gentle tones were asking of her health.

"Are you a man, Ermiston? Do you love her, and can you see her thus unmoved? At least, you will hand her to the carriage," said his cousin in a tone so very low that no other heard it.

"Oh, certainly! you would make an excellent master of the ceremonies;" replied the Earl, in a voice as low as the remark.

The Baronet bit his lip to prevent the outbreaking of his wrath and contempt, whilst the Earl advanced to Katharine.

However his Lordship's pride might have been wounded by finding that he had bestowed his affections on, and proffered his hand to, the daughter of a crazy pauper, as Mrs. Bampton had designated Nan Darrell, as well as by a self conviction of inferiority to his detested cousin, he could not stand by the side of the trembling Katharine, and speak coldly, or harshly. Her hasty glance as he advanced

had such a touching mingling of sorrow, and affection, that the rule of love was re-established; and she clung to his arm for support, after listening to his broken words of fondness and regret, with the confiding feelings of the morning. She was no longer miserable—he loved her still!

"Perhaps I had better get into the carriage first to assist dear Katharine," observed Mrs. Banham, to whose office of supporter Lord Ermiston had succeeded.

Mrs. Banham did so, helping in the invalid most tenderly; of course Mrs. Arnold followed; and a chariot could hold no more.

"I will take care of the dear girl; a little rest and quiet will do wonders: in the mean time, I must leave Maria and Charlotte to your Lordship's charge," said Mrs. Banham, leaning forward in the carriage with her peculiar smile, which was so peculiarly pleasing.

"Of course Ermiston would prefer accompanying the carriage; so I will take care of

the young ladies," observed the Baronet quickly.

"Thank you!" said the Earl in a more friendly tone, mounting the box as he spoke.

Perhaps his Lordship's gratitude was all the greater from marking the approach of crazy Nan, who came dancing up, shouting in shrill tones. "Good bye, Kate! Good bye, my Lord! I'll be sure to be at the wedding, and bring the waistcoat, and the gown, just like mine;" making quick succeding courtesies as she spoke.

"Drive on!" cried the Earl imperiously;—and the carriage drove on, whilst the poor crazy creature kissed her hand as a lady should, she said.

The most feeling might have pardoned a smile at the idea of such a mother-in-law for the proud, the elegant, the sensitive Lord Ermiston!—one of the most graceful, and fastidious men of his day. Think of such a

woman calling him son! Think of her being at his wedding, and presenting him with a red and yellow waistcoat, like her own flaunting gown.

CHAPTER IX.

"I love! and shall I leave her?"

Lord Ermiston supported Katharine to her room:—bade her be careful of herself; and hoped a little rest and quiet would quite restore her.

She had no right to quarrel with his words —but his manner:—she did not quarrel with that either; but she wept—wept bitterly, when his retreating step was no longer heard.

"My child! my poor child!" said Mrs. Arnold, hanging fondly over her.

Katharine shuddered at those tones so pitying, and so loving;—they told her that what she feared to think upon was more than suspected by another. She struggled with her tears, and stayed them enough to speak.

"Mother! dear mother! will you go to him—will you say that he is not bound—that he is free, if he wish it? I seek but his happiness."

Her words were broken by sobs; and she hid her face on the pillow when she ceased speaking.

"My good! my noble child! I will go as you bid me. May he prove worthy of your affection! Can you forgive me for this cruel trial? I knew not that that woman lived, and I fear too readily believed his assertion that he knew all."

"Forgive? I who owe you all? I do but cling more fondly to your love. You will not throw me off?"

"Never! Katharine, never!"

"I knew it:—and now go."

She went:—but Katharine recalled her before she had reached the door, holding both her hands in hers while she spoke.

"Now, dear mother, you must promise that you will say no more for me, than you would say if speaking of yourself. I feel you think he wishes to be free:—tell him that he is so:—but oh tell him kindly, gently! Plead not—persuade not. If he yielded, but not through love, I should know it—I should feel it; and my heart would break beneath the shame. I could not be deceived; and I should pine away until I left him free. Will you promise?"

"I will, whatever it may cost me. Now be calm:" kissing her crimson cheek, that paled upon the instant. "Do you seek rest."

"Rest!" murmured Katharine sadly, as her head sank back upon the pillow.

When Mrs. Arnold entered the drawing room, she found her hostess playing the con-

soler to Lord Ermiston; but, judging from his looks, the effect did little credit to her consoling powers.

"I make no excuse to you, Eliza; I would speak with the Earl alone," said Mrs. Arnold with the simple straightforwardness of her nature.

"Certainly," replied her old friend kindly, leaving the room on the instant.

"I hope Miss Darrell is better," observed his Lordship, breaking the embarrassing silence that ensued.

"She is better," replied Mrs. Arnold rather coldly, for his tones were not the tones of a lover. "It is of her that I would speak."

The Earl bowed slightly, and she continued.

"My surprise at that unhappy woman's appearance was scarcely less than your own, having for many years believed her dead."

"With this difference, Mrs. Arnold: I

knew not that such a person had ever existed, whilst to you she was no stranger."

There was so much rebuke in his words and manner, that Mrs. Arnold wondered at his increase of coldness, considering that he had suffered no fresh annoyance since they had parted, but had on the contrary met with kind consolation from the warm hearted, and friendly Mrs. Banham. She felt hurt at his implied suspicion of her sincerity; but answered kindly for her favorite's sake.

"I certainly saw Nan Darrell once, but only once; and from your own words concluded your knowledge of Katharine's parentage to be equal to mine in every point, but a personal acquaintance with her mother."

"You misunderstood me. I only knew, or rather had heard the general report, that Miss Darrell, was the daughter of an old and scantily provided friend. Had I known the truth, my conduct might—would have been

different. There was prudence in the concealment."

"There was affection in the concealment, Lord Ermiston;—for the prudence I will not answer: but all the blame attaching to this silence, and that you do blame it I cannot doubt, must rest solely upon me. Katharine Darrell is too grateful, too affectionate, not to have blazoned the story, as far as she herself was acquainted with it, but for my particular request to the contrary. You look incredulous:—you may doubt me—you should not doubt her. I fear I have acted most unwisely for my child's happiness: but she deserves no censure, and must receive none. She was but seven years of age when I found her in a retired hamlet, the victim of a village fury. Struck with her natural elegance, and the patience she displayed, I interfered to save her from the anger to which I had subjected her. The poor child clung to me for protection—looked to me as to a friend:—I fancied a re-

semblance to my lost daughter—and resolved to snatch her from the unhappy fate which threatened her;—and her mother yielded her to my care, resigning all her claims. Unwilling to subject her to the bitter pangs endured by those educated above their stations, I resolved to fit her only for a menial situation. Better for her had I kept my resolution:—but may I not be pardoned—and by a lover, if I failed? You know her!—could you—would you class her with menials? I speak not of her beauty; that is doubtless nothing save in the doting eyes of those who love her as myself;—I speak not of the natural elegance, which was hers even as a village child in rags:—I speak not of these,—I ask you not to think of them,—but I do ask you to think of her affectionate, and grateful heart, her generous temper, her intelligent mind, and endearing manners. You have not withstood the witchery of all these, how then should I, to whom they were displayed more warmly

and more openly? She had won from me the affection of a mother—she had gained instruction, that unfitted her for the station to which I had destined her, drinking in knowledge with a thirsting ear, before I was aware of the fact. I thought—I was willing to think that I had then advanced too far to retreat in common humanity to herself. I had already given her refinement above her birth,—I could not force the stream of knowledge and experience to flow backward. Could I crush that young warm heart, throwing it back with the delicate tastes, and the knowledge I had given into a companionship with the rude, the unlettered, and the ignorant? Could I bid her be a menial, whom I had fitted for the highest station? I could not do this. I might have been imprudent—I might thus have perilled her future happiness; but this would have been instant cruelty—it would have destroyed her present peace. I heard of her mother's death, attested, proved, they said: she was an

orphan, with none to link her to that station, whence I took her. She had no recollection of that mother which could pain her;—with no companion but myself she had no taunt to tell her what she had once been:—my retired life had prevented the real circumstances of her birth from being generally known, when I had first adopted her; and why should they be blazoned now to those who had no right to question or to know? I knew what the worldly would say.—Why subject her and myself to the sarcasms of the unfeeling? Such was my thought when, yielding to the entreaties of my friend, I consented to visit Sallowfield. I may have erred in this—I fear I have. There is but one excuse—will you my Lord, deny me that? I loved her! Could I then pain her myself, or subject her to pain from others without a compelling reason? She had become to me as a dear child;—at times, I forgot that she was not really such. Can you not pardon a mother's doting love

for Katharine Darrell? Nor was it I alone who loved her. It has been said that favorites have no friends—she has no enemies. The very persons who might naturally have envied her exaltation were the first to sanction it, and treat her with respect. The two old servants who had been with me, when I first saw her, of themselves determined to be silent on her birth. Is not that a proud memorial of her worth? Yet mistake me not; this silence was not to be maintained towards him, who loving my child, should seek her for his bride. I could give her fortune—and I would;—she had no near relation to blush for: so at least I thought. And should lowly birth, unknown to any but the one who loved her, bar her from a union equal to her worth?

"Your Lordship's manner was so guarded, that I scarcely guessed your wishes till told of them by yourself. I would then have revealed the truth—you said you knew it; and I let it pass, perhaps too easily. I sought not the

union,—my poor child sought it not;—I wished not so high a station; yet when you asked her of me, I could not but feel proud. I know not how the secret of her birth has been revealed: I know not how that unhappy woman was preserved; but both have come to pass; and there can be no further secrecy. I have said, and I repeat it, I can give fortune to my adopted child sufficient to excuse the wordly to the worldly; but him she loves—to whom she gives her hand, should prize her for her worth alone;—should shrink not from the worldling's sneer, but should have strength of mind to shield her from the sarcasm of the unfeeling. Thus far have I spoken for myself: I know not if your Lordship would still blame me."

"I blame you not!" replied the Earl, touched by her gentle earnestness, and faltering tone, though his cheek flushed at her concluding words. Was he above the worldling's sneer?

"My Lord, I thank you. And now I would do Katharine's bidding."

Lord Ermiston only bowed his acquiescence; and Mrs. Arnold fancied that he feared more than he desired, to hear her message. She paused a moment, trying to steady her voice; but the voice would not be steadied; and the tears would fall as she proceeded.

"Her mother's coming may have wrought some change upon your Lordship's feelings;—if so, she bade me say, and I must pray you to believe she spoke in love and sadness, not in anger;—if so, she bade me say that you are free! bound by no word that you have spoken! She saw my grief, and added:—'Go tell him this:—plead not—persuade not:—heed not my tears. If he felt bound by honor, not by love, I should soon know it—feel it:—and should pine to death beneath the shame. I only seek his happiness!' Such are the words of Katharine Darrell—such are mine. I love her:—I would give tears, for her tears—life,

for her life—yet will I ask no pity. She loves you—she has told you so:—but you are free: free in honor:—free to choose;—bound by no word!"

She paused, looking up in his face for a reply; he could not meet that look.

"I was not prepared for this," he said, in a voice scarcely steadier than her own, turning away abruptly.

Mrs. Arnold felt that her darling's fate hung on a thread: she was anxious for a decision:—she grieved that the decision was not instant; but she spoke not;—and her companion, harrassed by contending feelings, did not break the silence.

Steps approached: Lord Ermiston started, advanced hastily to Mrs. Arnold, and addressed her in a husky voice.

"I respect you—I love and admire her:—give me a little time to decide. You shall know to-night."

"As you will," said Mrs. Arnold; but she

sighed as she said it, and he understood the sigh, though he made no remark; hastily quitting the room by an opposite door to that by which others were approaching.

Neither Katharine or Mrs. Arnold appeared at dinner, which had been ordered early to give longer time for a rambling excursion in the evening; nor was the meal lingered over; for Mrs. Banham and her daughters were scarcely as brilliant as usual, whilst Lord Ermiston rarely spoke, and Sir Herbert Eustace, who was to depart before night, said little save in sudden bursts.

The rambling party had set off—Mrs. Banham had gone to comfort Mrs. Arnold; and Lord Ermiston was sitting alone in the library, leaning back in an easy chair, his generally tranquil features working with the mind's emotion, when Sir Herbert entered the room, professedly to look for a book. For some time he was, or choose to appear employed in the search; but his glance frequently wandered to

his cousin, whom he at last approached abruptly. The Earl looked up for a moment, but paid no further heed to his presence.

"Hear me, Ermiston!" said the Baronet speaking with an earnestness which compelled attention. "We are not friends—and we know it, let the world say what it may. I should hardly step from my path to serve you, but I feel for her; and you cannot doubt the disinterestedness of my advice. You have been listening to the serpent tongues of Mrs. Banham and her daughter, who would have you for their victim:—Why listen to any but your own heart? You love—you are beloved! and monarchs might be proud of the regard of Katharine Darrell. Grieve her not by pausing;—shame her not by doubting! Prove yourself worthy of her love! Stand boldly forth as her protector, and hush sneers and sarcasms by braving them."

"Lady Ermiston should be one on whom none could venture sneer or sarcasm," replied

his Lordship, little pleased at the interference.

"Lord Ermiston should be above them!" said his cousin, with something like contempt.

"Lord Ermiston is not so great a philosopher, as Sir Herbert Eustace. If he heed not a mad and vulgar mother-in-law, let him take the lady himself; she may do for a Baronet, though not fitting bride for an Earl; and if she cannot be a Countess, her protectress may submit to her being something less."

"Shame! Shame Ermiston! to think—to speak thus of Katharine Darrell, and her generous protectress. I should despise you more than I do, but that you are ruled by anger—like not my meddling—and have been galled and goaded by the Banhams. You deserve her not!"

"Permit me to yield her to my more worthy cousin then: no doubt, she will consent to the transfer."

Sir Herbert's wrath rose, and the cousins

stood looking fiercely at each other for a moment; then the Earl turned away, and the Baronet paced the room; but again stopped abruptly before the taunter.

"I defy your taunts! you feel your own meanness, even whilst you yield to it; and despise yourself more than I despise you. You know that Janet's words have come to pass—you know that you have crossed my love—and you know too that you have triumphed in this crossing:—my defeat has enhanced the glory of your victory. I did—I do love Katharine Darrell; with a strength I guessed not, till I learned she loved another; but not to possess her love, would I, Herbert Eustace, become Earl of Ermiston, who has happiness within his grasp, and will not take it because worldlings smile!—who has won a young, warm heart, rich in worth, and now would crush the gentle heart he won! Mark me!" laying his hand on his arm, "Mark me! if I thought only of myself, I would give half my

fortune that Katharine Darrell should wed any other than Lord Ermiston:—that barbed the arrow!—but I could not look upon her silent agony, and think of my own selfish hopes. And if I, a rejected wooer, rejected for the man I almost hate, if I could not see her thus unmoved, what then should he have felt for whom I was rejected? I plead for her against myself. Be you worthy of her! quit you like a man—an honorable man!—despise the insinuations of deceit—the mocks of folly! soothe her, who loves you—protect her, who clings to you! Do this and I forgive you all; nay, I offer you this hand in friendship. I should admire and envy then, as I despise you now; for you would have vanquished the weakness of long years—and proved yourself a conqueror indeed!"

The Earl had not heard this generous appeal unmoved; but he felt irritated by a sense of his own weakness; and, do what he would to shut out the vision, crazy Nan was ever

before his eyes with her ludicrous fancies, and the shouts of laughter succeeding their display. The memory alone was torture to his sensitive pride. Of a less firm and energetic character than his cousin, if not as often led into open acts of wrong, he was deficient in his ready frankness to confess, and to repair. He was touched—he was half convinced; for, in spite of his taunts, he still loved; but he could not resolve at once to act the generous part.

"I believe you disinterested," he answered, with a coldness and embarrassment, which contrasted strongly with the Baronet's open warmth. "I would do much for Katharine's sake:—but her mother! Setting aside all else: think of her madness! I should tremble at every quicker glance. And have I a right to risk the entailing such a doom on future generations?"

"I might admit the force of this argument

if urged by another, "replied the Baronet after a moments pause, and in a calmer tone: "but you have not held madness an objection before, witness Mrs. Morven's negociation for the hand of the great northern heiress. Her mother's station and vulgarity might in prudence have checked an attachment—but can it—should it destroy it when formed? Why visit on the gentle and confiding Katharine, the misfortunes of her parent? She had not done so to you, had you changed places."

"Perhaps not; but she is a woman; a simple loving woman!"

"That very admission shames our manhood worse than a thousand crimes. Can the weak alone be generous?—must the strong be selfish? You love her, as I never thought that you could love, guard, protect her. That woman can be provided for at a distance. Shew the world that you are proud of your wife, and that world will prate of her worth; there is no coward like the world: and only

greater cowards are its slaves. Go to her—look upon her—listen to her—then leave her, if you can."

"This is strange advice from you," remarked his Lordship, no longer contending against that advice, the thought of Katharine's merits having again conquered pride.

"What then? I am a strange person! no one wonders at my acts:" replied the Baronet attempting careless gaiety. The attempt was a failure—the lips quivered and the voice faltered.

He had indeed pleaded for Katharine against himself; and now he felt the misery of conquest—nay, almost regretted the victory he had achieved. Yet she could never be other to him than at that moment;—he was not one to be second to any in love, least of all to Ermiston. He strode to the door, but turning round before he left the room, said emphatically, "Go to her at once; and heed not the Banhams."

The Earl stood for some moments pondering on the words of his cousin, then proceeded to follow his advice: but before he had announced his intentions to Mrs. Arnold, the Baronet was on his way to Eustace Park, endeavouring to outride thought.

Mrs. Arnold smiled through her tears as the Earl declared his love to be unchanged; neither hinting a reproach at the delay, nor making any observation on his still rather embarrassed manner. And Katharine—what did she say—when acquainted with his wishes?"

"I knew he was kind and generous! How shall I repay him?" was her exclamation, hiding her blushes on Mrs. Arnold's shoulder.

If Lord Ermiston had any return of his former doubts, and irresolution, during Mrs. Arnold's absence, they vanished the moment Katharine entered that lady's dressing room, with a light, yet timid step, the eyes bent

upon the ground, the cheek changing from white, to red; from red, to white. Her victory was complete.

"Katharine! dear Katharine!" he exclaimed springing to her side, whilst she still clung to Mrs. Arnold's arm. These few words were enough!—she felt that she was beloved, and asked not—doubted not. There was nothing but joy in the present:—nothing but joy in the future.

Mrs. Arnold lingered a few moments to give her time to recover from her first confusion, then rose to leave the room; but before she could quit it at one door, an unexpected and unwelcome visitor entered it at the other. All had been too much occupied by their own thoughts and feelings to note an unusual bustle in the house, or to hear the peremptory order of a haughty voice, "Shew me to Lord Ermiston, wherever he may be:" and not till his Lordship started from his seat, with the

exclamation of "My mother!" were either aware that the proud Mrs. Morven was in the house.

"Yes; your mother! Lord Ermiston: and she must speak with you on the instant; and in private," she said, after scanning the two ladies, who shrank from her keen and haughty look.

Mrs. Arnold and Katharine rose to leave the mother and her son to the privacy desired, the former, at least, thinking that the stately bearing of the parent, and the troubled and embarrassed look of the child, boded no happy future.

"Stay, Mrs. Arnold; we will go to the library," said his Lordship, starting into action, and adding as he followed his imperious mother: "I shall soon return."

Mrs. Arnold and Katharine looked at each other; and then looked away:—neither wished to read the tale told in the other's eyes:

and neither remarked aloud that his parting tone had been irresolute.

Time passed, and still Lord Ermiston returned not;—a longer time each thought than it had really been:—but at length a servant entered with "Mrs. Morven's compliments, and she should be glad to see them in the library."

Neither uttered a conjecture on the purpose of the message, as they proceeded thither, arm-in-arm.

Mrs. Morven, a middle aged woman with fine features, and a commanding height, and manner, was sitting very upright in a large *fauteuil*; whilst near her stood her son, with a flushed cheek and embarrassed air, rolling and unrolling a print, evidently unconscious of the merely mechanical movement. The lady rose as those whose presence she had requested entered, and continued to stand, instead of requesting them to be seated; and this too though Katharine's pallid cheeks and trem-

bling frame should have compelled the courtesy. It was evident that she intended to make the interview as brief as possible; yet her haughty tone was almost modulated into softness, as she met the eye of the gentle Mrs. Arnold, and looked on her agitated companion.

"I should apologize, Mrs. Arnold, for entering so abruptly on an unpleasant subject; but I imagine the least painful course to all will be to make the discussion as short as may be. You are aware that Lord Ermiston's offer of his hand to Miss Darrell was made in ignorance of her parentage; and was, of course, no longer binding on its discovery. I will spare you and him any allusion to the pain which such a disclosure must have occasioned all; and simply say, that no real friend can desire his lordship's union with Miss Darrell, however great her virtues and her charms. As a mother, I must naturally wish that my daughter-in-law, the Countess of Ermiston, shall be of noble birth; of a station equal to his own, and

for whose connections he need not blush. All must hold him free when undeceived as to Miss Darrell's parentage; but, pity having induced him to renew his offer, his fastidious feelings of honor make him anxious to receive from you a release from an engagement, whose fulfilment must entail misery on many, subjecting all to daily slights and vexations, and separating him for ever from a mother, who has held no privation great, no suffering unrepaid, which could promote his good or honor. I cannot receive Miss Darrell as a daughter; —I can hold no communion with my son should he make a choice so unfitting his noble race; and I leave it to you to decide whether, under these circumstances, he can or ought, from a fancied feeling of honor, to bring misery on himself—perhaps death to an only surviving parent."

The lady ceased, looking to Mrs. Arnold for a reply; but Mrs. Arnold answered not. Had it been herself, she would have spoken on the

instant; but she felt the clinging of her trembling child; and she dared not speak the words that would destroy her youthful hopes. There was a brief silence, even Mrs. Morven turning away in pity from the struggle of the gentle girl; and then Katharine herself broke the painful stillness, speaking to the son, and not the mother; raising her eyes as she spoke to the face of Lord Ermiston.

"Was it through pity only that your Lordship sought me? I prayed that this might not be."

"No, Katharine; I loved you!" he exclaimed with a vehemence at variance with his usual quiet manner, making a step in advance as he spoke, whilst the roll which he had been unfolding fell at his feet.

A look of joy came into Katharine's eyes, heavy with their late weeping.

Mrs. Morven interposed.

"My son did—does love you, Miss Darrell; and were your birth other than it is, I should

readily receive you as my daughter;—but think what he would suffer from the mother you would give him? How would she replace the parent, who cherished his childhood? How would you bear to see him who loves you, the representative of a noble race, become through you the mock of folly, and the sport of ridicule?"

Lord Ermiston involuntarily drew nearer to his mother as her words brought more distinctly to his mind the laugh which had followed, and must ever follow Nan Darrell's mad vagaries; and the sneers to which he would be subjected.

Katharine saw the movement; and sighed deeply. There wanted but this to convince her of that, of which she would still fain have doubted;—by that movement, he had severed the fragile chain which had bound them to each other.

"You do not understand me, madam," she said, with a gentle dignity, which awed even

the haughty Mrs. Morven; then, turning to Lord Ermiston, she again addressed him. "You are free my Lord!—you were free before!—you might have spared me this!—you might have spared yourself. Why seek me, when I had given back the vows you plighted? Farewell! May you be happy! such is my earnest prayer."

Lord Ermiston again made a step towards her, but his mother placed her hand on his arm; and Katharine left the room with Mrs. Arnold as quickly as her failing strength permitted.

Mrs. Morven made no remark;—she attempted not to thank Katharine—she pitied—she admired—and was silent. She was a sensible woman;—she was all kindness to her son, now that she had gained her point;—she made no allusion to the past; and, more than all, she carried him off in her own carriage, after a very brief adieu to Mrs. Banham, and the requisite orders to his servants.

The next day saw the departure of Mrs. Arnold and her adopted daughter on a tour of some weeks, despite the entreaties of Mrs. Banham, in the hope that change of scene, and the varieties of travel, as well as the absence of all that could recal the past might the sooner banish that past from their minds.

The absence of all that could recal the past! —vain words! Scenes and faces may be changed—but the bright sun and placid moon; morning and evening; mid-night and mid-day; are still the same. And sight and sound; and earth and air, have they not a thousand connecting memories with the past?—links in the chain of thought we cannot break, binding the past, the present, and the future, in mighty fetters which death alone can burst? Who has not felt that a glading light—a closing door—a scent—a hue—a breath—can bring the past before us as vividly as can the spell of the enchanter.

Is not memory the mighty master of ma-

gicians? And memory brings us sorrow—for there are few who have not mourned:—Yet who would part with memory? Who would throw off her spell?—who would forget the looks and words of those we loved?—the kindness, of the kind?—the gentle tones of the affectionate, even though their memory should cause a sigh? If imagination hath more brightness; memory hath more tenderness.

Should any wish to learn how the secret of Kate's birth was known, (for our part, we marvel when a secret is preserved, not when it is revealed) a few words will explain the matter.

Servants, strange to say, will gossip as well as their masters and mistresses; so the domestics at Sallowfield talked over Mrs. Arnold, and Miss Darrell, wondering what relation the latter was to the former, till, after some discussion, they decided, as Mrs. Banham had decided, that Katharine was, as they expressed themselves, a love child of the late Mr. Arnold's. When grown more familiar by longer acquaint-

ance, they stated this belief to the servants from Beechen Cliff. The stately Mrs. Shaw only looked more stately, contenting herself with a positive denial, on her certain knowledge; but the footman, who had been at Cowford, after profitting more than usual, certainly more than was desirable, by the hospitality of the Sallowfield butler, provoked by the charge against his master, to whom he had been much attached, "outed with the truth," as he admitted to Mrs. Shaw the following morning, who concealed the fact from her lady to spare her unnecessary annoyance. Sound ascends!—The story passed from the servant's hall to Mrs. Banham's dressing room (that lady never discouraged the prattle of her attendant) and the candid Mrs. Bampton always persisted that she had the first suspicion of the truth from overhearing her hostess caution her maid, in an incautiously loud tone, how she spread a report that might be incorrect.

That the tale did not reach Lord Ermiston

through his servants may be accounted for by the fact that his Lordship never condescended to gossip with his domestics (his tastes being equally fastidious wherever he might be); or perhaps still more satisfactorily by the second fact, that the secret had not been revealed till two days before it became a subject of notoriety.

The information which induced Mrs. Morven to speed to Sallowfield and snatch her son from a peril, in her estimation little less awful than a shameful death, namely, an unequal marriage, reached her through the same channel—the gossip of servants. Some Sarah or Harriet at Mrs. Banham's, wrote to some Sarah or Harriet at Mrs. Morven's, "that Lord Ermiston was catched by Miss Banham," for the manœuvring of the family was known, or suspected by almost every one acquainted with them, save the single minded Mrs. Arnold. Janet, the old Scotch nurse, who shared Mrs. Morven's desire of a grand match for the Earl, told the

tale to her mistress; who set out on the instant, her promptness and energy still maintaining the mastery over his lordship which she had acquired in his childhood.

Whilst changing horses at the next stage to Sallowfield, Mr. Hensworth rode into the inn yard; and being distinctly connected in blood, though very dissimilar in tastes, entered her room with the avowed purpose of paying his respects, and the unavowed purpose of annoying her, and her son; he viewing neither with favor on account of their pride. After due enquiries, concerning her health, he mentioned having just quitted Sallowfield, being obliged to go to town that night by the mail, which would pass through in half an hour; and on her asking for the Earl, proceeded to congratulate her on his approaching marriage, giving without any ill will to Katharine, such an account of the appearance of her crazy mother as left his hearer little more sane, and crowning all by pointing out to her notice, as a

future connection, Nan Darrell herself, who passed the inn window at the moment, in a shabby little cart, driven by an ill looking man. Mr. Hensworth was fully avenged, even without stopping Nan, and introducing her, as he proposed; and Mrs. Morven's speed was not lessened by this new intelligence; whilst her son's dread of ridicule, and irresolution of character ensured her victory.

Oh, the fearful effects of servants' gossiping! It is an expensive luxury, that should be confined to the use of their betters. To some indeed, it seems a necessary, rather than a luxury.

Before her departure, Mrs. Arnold sent to make enquiries after crazy Nan, intending to provide for her at a distance; but she had left the village with a man, by the Western road, or the Northern road, or some other; and this was all the intelligence which could be obtained.

Mr. Bell had quitted Sallowfield early in the morning; or would, doubtless, have experienced great pleasure in finding fault with every one.

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OR, THE

GIPSY MOTHER.

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OR,

THE GIPSY MOTHER.

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NAN DARRELL;

OR,

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CHAPTER I.

"He that hath gold is virtuous, wise, discreet:—
The poor are ever in the wrong."

"A bird—but with a broken wing."
Harvey.

MANY weeks had passed, and Mrs. Arnold and Katharine were again sitting in the drawing-room at Sallowfield; not as permanent inmates, but merely spending some hours there on their return to Beechen Cliff, at the very pressing solicitations of Mrs.

Banham and her daughters. Katharine would most gladly have been spared this visit, but concealed her own repugnance rather than deprive her kind protectress of another meeting with her old and valued friend. Poor Kate was greatly changed: she was thinner, paler—much thinner, and much paler; her childlike gaiety was gone, for the griefs of the woman had come upon her; and her smiles were sad and rare. She never murmured, and she rarely wept, at least, when any saw her; but Mrs. Arnold read in her devoted attentions to herself, her almost restless seeking after change and occupation, how deeply she had felt—how hardly she was struggling for peace, and striving to make the cheerfulness, which was now but assumed, reality. She had never named Lord Ermiston since she had given him back his vows, and Mrs. Arnold, respecting her wishes, maintained as strict a silence, neither encouraging weakness by talking over what was better forgotten, nor

fretting her by cold precepts of submission. She saw that she was striving to subdue herself and that her own silent sympathy was felt and appreciated. She feared lest this visit to Sallowfield might renew her sorrow in its first violence, but if Katharine felt, and she did feel acutely, she only showed it by a paler cheek, and a pressure of Mrs. Arnold's hand as they drove through the gate.

The Banhams were as kind, nay, kinder than ever; and would only permit them to depart as they wished, on receiving their promise to come again at some future time. The young ladies left their other guests to be near dear Katharine, and Mr. George took his station by her side, looking his admiration, as he had done before, his silence being his greatest sign of sense.

Kate was exerting herself to repay these attentions by greater gaiety than usual, when a servant announced Sir John and Mr. Eustace.

Not remarking the christian name, or thinking it a mistake, Katharine rose, passed her hand before her eyes; and then sat down again, from inability to leave the room.

"They are strangers to you dear;" remarked Maria.

"Strangers?" repeated Katharine, who, connecting Sir Herbert with his cousin, could scarcely keep herself from fainting, by the aid of a vinaigrette with which she pretended to be occupied.

"Yes, strangers. Have you not heard that Sir Herbert is no longer Sir Herbert, but plain Mr. Eustace, his uncle having returned to claim the title; bringing also a son to succeed himself?"

Katharine had not heard, and the intelligence brought to her mind Sir Herbert's remarks on his uncle's portrait, and Mr. Bell's wish for his return. However glad to be spared a meeting with the former possessor of the title, who, save on one occasion had been

uniformly kind, she could not but regret his change of fortune. She ventured a look at the to her new baronet, and his son; but she did so with trembling, for they too were the cousins of Lord Ermiston, and might bear some resemblance:—they bore none. In the father she saw an old man with a harsh, and sinister expression of countenance; in the son a rather softened likeness of the parent, cunning rather than harsh; with awkward manners: arising from a consciousness of inferiority to his present society.

Further observation shewed that the new baronet and his heir apparent were courted and flattered as had been their predecessor. No one seemed to think the expression of Sir John's features sinister—no one seemed to imagine awkwardness in the son. Mrs. Banham and Maria were most friendly and attentive; and, on the guests expressing a desire to see the garden, Charlotte volunteered to do the honors with the same *empressement* with

which she had offered to do the honors to the former baronet, whom all had declared to be the most delightful person in the world; whilst Mr. Banham said more than usual about the pleasure of hearing their opinions of some alterations, intimating the superiority of their tastes over that of the late Sir Herbert.

Scarcely were the visitors out of hearing, ere, *selon la mode*, their merits and demerits were discussed; but contrary to the usual practice with regard to the absent, the balance was greatly in favor of the former. Whether this arose from charity, the real worth of the parties discussed, or their possession of rank and wealth, and having as yet had no time to offend, we leave others to decide. Sir John was declared to be sensible, with manners a little stately, perhaps, but fitting his age. Mr. Eustace pleasing and modest, (the last a rare virtue in the present day) and both great acquisitions to the neighbourhood. The dis-

cussion then turned on the former baronet, not one by mistake, giving him the title which he had so long borne, or failing to call him Mr. Herbert Eustace in contradistinction to Mr. Eustace, the heir apparent.

"I wonder Mr. Herbert Eustace gave up the title and estate so easily, having always considered him rather obstinate and self-willed; I advised one or two alterations, but he would not hear of them. By the bye, I hear that Sir John is going to act exactly as I recommended," observed one of the party.

"Obstinacy could have been of no avail here; and Herbert Eustace always knew how to secure his own interests. The horse he sold me at such an enormous price two years ago, pretending all the time that he did not wish to part with it, has turned out lame. Sir John was too wise for him. Depend upon it the nephew would have disputed the point, and kept the uncle out of the property if he

could; but the uncle had guarded against all doubts;—he had every requisite proof and paper, though his great likeness to his portrait, and the testimony of some old people would have been sufficient. Herbert Eustace did all he could, haggling about the arrears, which of course were his uncle's due, till Sir John was disgusted, and did not make him the handsome present which he had intended," replied another.

"Well now, I have heard quite a different story;" interposed a kind hearted old maiden lady, who had more than once profited by the late baronet's kind attentions, attentions which he was always more particular to pay to those whom he considered slighted. "I have heard, and from good authority too, that he yielded with honorable promptness, though candidly acknowledging that he should have preferred retaining wealth, and title; whilst Sir John showed such a grasping temper, claiming even the smallest amount of arrears, that a clever

lawyer, and honorable man, a friend of Herbert's, recommended him to let the law decide the point, all the claims against him having arisen from the present baronet's perverse, and inexplicable silence for so many years, though aware of the universal belief of his death. This the young man declined. His high spirit would not brook retaining any thing, which the most scrupulous could consider belonging of right to another; and he only accepted his friend's offer of arranging matters with Sir John, who showed any thing but a kindly spirit, striving to reduce him to beggary, instead of thinking of making him a present. To pay all demands, and provide for some old servants, Herbert gave up even his father's private fortune, and his mother's settlement, retaining only five thousand pounds for himself, the legacy of a god-father. In the belief of his friend, and another gentleman who assisted in the arrangement, Sir John has

received more than in equity he could have claimed."

"A very pretty tale! And who may have told you this, my dear madam? The young gentleman himself, I suppose; he was always a capital hand at a good story," remarked the first speaker, with a sneer.

"Yes, indeed!" observed Mr. Bampton, who was again on a visit at Sallowfield. "His conduct on that point was most unjustifiable, and unwarrantable; I often spoke to him on the subject; but it was of no use—he was above advice. You remember the horrible mischief he made between Walker and Miss Stephens:—caused a duel, and might have been hanged for murder—and justly too. Then the monstrous lies, I really can call them nothing better, that he used to tell about his pictures and curiosities. It was most unjustifiable, unwarrantable, and unpardonable."

"It was indeed quite shocking!" responded

several, who had, in former days, been lavish of their praise of the baronet's entertaining catalogue of his goods and chattels, as he used to call them.

"Then his deception about Stagg, who ran off with Cooper's daughter, saying he had been called to the bar, making sensible people look so foolish, and rendering a father miserable for the sake of a wretched pun," remarked another, who, at the time, had found that wretched pun a source of merriment, and had been forward in persuading Sir Herbert that he deserved no blame.

"Yes, it was most unjustifiable, and unwarrantable," responded Mr. Bampton. "Quite impossible for any one to know, whether he spoke truth or falsehood. I never believed a word he said."

"Nor I," observed Mr. George Banham, who had credited every syllable.

"As for his manners, I never thought

them elegant; did you Miss Banham?" asked a very conceited visitor.

"Far from it! they wanted dignity and harmony. And as for his wit, as people termed it, he was little better than a common punster, whilst his high spirits verged on vulgarity."

"And he had no taste in dress," added her brother, looking down complacently on a new waistcoat, the counterpart of some new model.

"You are too hard on the poor young man:—he had some good points, and one could not help laughing occasionally at his stories. I hope he will succeed in the law, which I understand he means to study," observed the ever seemingly friendly Mrs. Banham.

"Oh yes! he deserves to be called to the bar," said another, and a loud laugh followed.

"Hush!" said some one with a warning glance towards the door leading into the conservatory.

All eyes were turned in that direction; and there was Herbert Eustace leaning against the door way, with a curling lip and flashing eye, that told he had heard some at least of the late remarks, which the sudden silence succeeding his appearance fixed upon himself. His speaking glances wandered from one to other of the party (to the confusion of most) as he advanced with the unembarrassed air of one accustomed from his childhood to maintain a distinguished station in society; and to whom a change of fortune could bring no change of manner. But for the curl that lingered on his lip, and a slight tone of sarcasm, a spectator might have doubted whether he had overheard the philippic against himself.

"Good morning, Miss Banham;" he began, she being first in his path, shaking hands with

her as of old. "You see I maintain my ancient privileges, in spite of my new fortunes, and make the unceremonious entrance of a friend as in former days. Others may change, but you and your family are still the same: I know the real worth of all your friendly professions in my favor."

Even the practised Maria was abashed, but Herbert Eustace, taking no notice of her embarrassment, passed on to pay his compliments to others with the same careless ease, greeting each as had been his wont in other times, only indulging in one or two equivocal remarks to be read at discretion, and pressing the hand of the kind hearted maiden lady with a pressure which brought tears into her eyes. Thus did he till, in his tour of the room, he came to Mrs. Arnold, before concealed from his observation by a screen; then the careless ease of his manner left him. The warmth of her welcome, contrasting so strongly with the coldness of others, though she too would rather

not have met him, as a slight agitation showed, by recalling all the painful past to his mind, for a moment, overcame him; and he could only press her hand, and turn away; but the next instant he had resumed his former ease. He was not going to make his feelings a jest for those who had none; and he enquired after her health, and even that of Miss Darrell in the unembarrassed tone of one who had nothing to conceal; yet there was a slight increase of colour on hearing that Katharine was on the lawn, though Mrs. Arnold did not add what was the truth, that she had just stepped out from the window, willing, if possible, without the appearance of rudeness, to avoid a meeting that must agitate her. He was still talking with Mrs. Arnold when his uncle and cousin entered the room accompanied by Charlotte Banham, and her father. His old love of mischief induced him to approach the young lady with an appearance of *empressement* which overpowered and annoyed

her, since it conveyed the idea that he had been, and still was a peculiar favorite. The more she endeavoured to assume a cold indifference, and force him to a like assumption, the more he thwarted her wish by an increased ardour; and by alluding to former meetings and conversations that contradicted her coldness, till having almost worried her into a passion, and sufficiently annoyed his cousin, the heir apparent, to whom the young lady had been particularly civil, he turned away with a light laugh in which mingled something of bitterness, telling the wondering Mr. Eustace, as he did so, that he trusted to him to keep up his interest with *la belle*. His manner to his uncle and cousin had before been as cool as cool could be;—feeling respect for neither, he would not assume its aspect merely to prevent malice fancying pique or envy in his demeanour. The crowding of the rest of the party round Sir John, to assist in discussing some projected improvements, at Eustace

Park, gave Herbert a few minutes private conversation with Mrs. Arnold.

"You are a very simple person—a very unwise one. Why do you linger here with a briefless, lawless barrister, for in truth I know little more than the very babes know, namely that there is such a work as Coke upon Lyttleton, when you might be basking in the beams of the newly risen sun, bandying pretty words with a tolerably rich Baronet—rather a lion too? Why not pursue a wiser course? Few like you see the rising and the setting sun at the same time, or have the opportunity of profiting by the lessons of those:

> "Who both by precept and example show,
> How they can smile upon the rising sun—
> Frown on its sunset glow."

This is not exactly what Byron says, but he is not here to quarrel with the emendation, and ask what a poor Ex-Baronet means by misquoting his lines."

"A glorious rising may succeed a cloudy setting," remarked Mrs. Arnold kindly; so kindly, that he turned away with a melancholy shake of the head.

"I am a fool!—as great a fool as yourself, begging your pardon," he said abruptly, after a moment's silence. "Why should I care what such beings as those think of me? I thought in my prosperity that I despised them; but I did not, nay, do not know myself. Then they are going to alter Eustace Park;—just the part my father so much loved—and his brother knows it. I would give him the little his grasping hate has left me to leave it as it is, but that I know he would take the money and evade the terms. Well, it does not matter! I shall never see the old place again—I could not bear to see him there. I came here to-day to take leave; and there is not one who would care did I leave it undone. How can you be such a simpleton as to patronize a mere punster—an unmannered, ill-

drest beggar — a boisterous, vulgar, story teller?—Whose word no man relies on."

"Hush! Hush!" said Mrs. Arnold gently, laying her hand on his arm. "I must not have you speak in that tone, though I feel, deeply feel the provocation. I have long wished to thank you for your kindness—"

"A kindness! never think of remembering a kindness!—it is always the first thing to be forgotten. You certainly are *non compos*," he observed, interrupting her. "Well! Well!" he continued, "do not look such a touching reproach; and I will try to be good. If it were not for some few such hearts as yours, I should turn cynic like Mr. Bell. I wonder what he says to my fall; he wished it, and, therefore, doubtless rejoices. He was a harsh reprover, yet a just one too I believe sometimes, but I differ from the world;—I never liked to be found fault with."

"I do not mean to find fault with you, I

only wish to thank you for your kindness, when another—" she hesitated.

"Ay, when another!—There it is;" he said abruptly, in a tone of contempt; then checking himself, he added:—"No matter—it could not be helped—and it is all over now. One cannot force oneself to love, though perhaps one can to unlove; at least, I hope so." Then lowering his voice and speaking with great feeling. "May I ask how she is? How she has borne—?"

"Well! beautifully! like herself;" replied Mrs. Arnold, understanding his broken question. "Ever striving to conquer and conceal, that she may fail in no duty, give pain to none; yet feeling deeply—very deeply."

"I knew it would be so! I knew it must;" said Herbert Eustace warmly; and with a slight faltering in his voice. "And her health? and her sunny smile that it was such a happiness to meet?"

"Her health is delicate;—her sunny smile I hope may return—but now—"

"I understand—I was a simpleton to ask that. What a pity that a cloud should have crossed the brightness of her mood!—that sorrow should have dulled the glory of her spring of life!"

"It is sad—more sad if we look only to the present; but it may, I trust it will be for her future good; and now such is her own thought amid all her grief. How could we bear our sorrows but for this trust?" exclaimed Mrs. Arnold with a look of hope, bright hope, lighting up her placid features.

"This should shame me to submission: I have thought too little of these things."

"Think of them now then;—now in your youth, ere the heart is seared, and the spirit warped or hardened with the trials, and the cares of life. Turn to Him who delighteth not to chastise: and does it but to draw us nearer to himself."

"Thank you! I will think of your words," replied Herbert Eustace, touched by her gentle, but earnest appeal.

He was indeed grateful for her friendly interest, and her soft tones and pleading manner sank deep into his heart. It was some moments ere he spoke again.

"I have not sought Miss Darrell, fearing lest my presence might recall the past more strongly to her mind;—will you hereafter tell her this, and add, that I hope she has forgiven and forgotten my ungenerous harshness? I stand well in the opinion of so few, that I must right myself with the kindly disposed. I would have her regard me as a friend not a fierce and furious Ogre," he added gaily.

"I will engage that she shall regard you as a friend, though she may shrink from meeting you to-day."

"That is natural. I only mean should we meet by accident hereafter."

"Accident! Why not on purpose some

months hence, when Katharine shall have gained the firmness she is seeking? I do not ask you to Beechen Cliff till then."

"I will think about it. I am sure I should be better for your gentle schooling; and I will teach you worldly wisdom in return. Do not ask me till I can serve you with legal advice, and then your courtesy may be repaid."

"I will learn no such worldly wisdom; and you must not become suspicious: there are many kind, warm hearts, though erring ones; I should sorrow to see you a selfish misanthrope."

"There are warm hearts in the world, Mrs. Arnold; and your kind words are engraven on my memory. As few will seek my acquaintance, I shall have time to know myself; and learn to despise their falsehood," he added pointing to the group round the Baronet. "To you I am bound for ever;—you have reproved, but in kindness. Count upon me

now and through life to serve you, or her; though alas, it is little that I can do at present; but if I should ever become famous in the law, I shall insist on your engaging in a suit that I may carry it on for you."

"If you please ma'am your carriage is at the door," said a servant approaching Mrs. Arnold.

"Are you going?—then I am gone! It would be of no use to sport witicisms now, for not a creature would laugh at them; so I intend to be very grave and sedate for the future, and hold with Mr. Bampton, that it is unjustifiable, unwarrantable, and unpardonable to tell a good story, or say a good thing. Nay, do not look grave! you must allow me to vent a little of my vexation in words. It is very difficult for an idol to descend gracefully from his shrine, and mix with every day mortals, in an every day way; he cannot help wondering and vexing a little now and then that he is not bowed down to as before. His

worshippers having been only some of the world's commonalty makes little difference. But I really am going directly for many good and sufficient reasons:—poor people are required to be reasonable. In the first place having been unbaroneted, I must not presume to hand you to your carriage;—and why should I subject myself to the mortification of seeing that service performed by another? Secondly: I shall avoid a meeting with Miss Darrell, for which she will thank me. Thirdly: not being in the most amiable of moods, I had better keep myself to myself. Fourthly, and I believe lastly: as I must expect to be cut up the moment my back is turned, I think it good policy to leave a friend who may say a word in my favor. So good bye! Heaven bless you—and her! How you will hear me abused! every tongue will be let loose as I close the door behind me—the great door, for I shall not return as a friend, lest I should example the truth of

some other disagreeable old adage. Well let them talk! it is for the public good, that the departed should be dissected for the benefit of those remaining," he added with some of his former reckless gaiety, shaking hands with Mrs. Arnold, and then making brief *adieux* to the rest of this party, who looked relieved by his absence.

Mrs. Arnold's immediate departure prevented her hearing the dissection to which he had so patriotically determined to submit.

The Banhams were all regret at so short a visit, and Mr. George handed Katharine to the carriage with a sentimental air, whose meaning she never guessed, till something having led to the subject during their journey home, Mrs. Arnold ventured to fulfil a promise extorted from her by her old friend, and name the wishes of the whole family that she should become the bride of the highly interesting heir. A smile half playful, half contemptuous curled Kate's ruby lip, as she considered the

suitor submitted to her choice; then other thoughts came crowding on, and she sank back in the carriage with a burst of tears.

"I think I can anticipate your decision Kate; though I promised to mention the subject, lest others should name it from whom you would less willingly hear it."

"I think you may, my own dear mother;—I wonder Mrs. Banham touched upon so delicate a point."

"My old friend meant it kindly, but I have lately doubted if she is quite as sensitive as in our younger days; she has mixed more in the world than myself, which may account for this. She spoke of pique and expediency, but I knew you better than to think that you would be ruled by either."

"I have no pique;—and this is not a point on which expediency should be consulted. I will be yours!—all yours!—yours only! Do I not deserve this pain for letting others share

my heart?" exclaimed the grateful girl, throwing her arms around her.

"Not so dear child; it was but natural:—it was but as I would have it again hereafter. I would not leave you unprotected."

"No, I can never love again;—and am now wholly yours."

Mrs. Arnold did not dispute the point at the moment; she had loved but once herself, and she knew how the young heart shudders at the thought of change. Its first affection scorned, and trampled on, it may feel the necessity of subduing, it cannot admit the idea of transfer. But Katharine was very young, and she hoped much from time! How we all count on time! It does wonders—but we may not live to see them. She soothed her into composure, and on some allusion being made to Herbert Eustace gave his message, which her young favorite received with less emotion than she had anticipated.

The return to Beechen Cliff was a great trial, but to spare Mrs. Arnold, Katharine forced herself to cheerfulness, though shuddering at the thought of what she had been—of what she now was. The doom of man was on her! Sorrow had crossed her path, and her life could no longer be, as it had been for years, as a cloudless summer day. The blight of experience was on all things round her: she had learnt the uncertainty of joy, not from precepts, (the young forget precepts, in fact scarce believe them) but from personal suffering. The truth had been brought home to her;—traced on her heart by the sharp instrument of sorrow—there must now be submission, the more humble, and the more cheerful, the happier would be her walk on earth—the more hopeful her departure from its cares.

Mrs. Arnold, for Katharine's sake would have prolonged her tour; but the Millars, who had just arrived from India, proposed being

at Beechen Cliff the day after her return; other engagements they said, making it inconvenient to fix a later time; and she did not object, thinking their society and that of their children might divert the thoughts of her protegée from melancholy subjects. Nor was she herself without her sorrows, independant of those connected with Katharine: death had been busy since her departure. The worthy old clergyman and his estimable wife, the valued friends of many years, had died within four and twenty hours of each other, and rested in the same grave. Though greatly shocked by this intelligence, her frame having been already weakened by her anxiety for Katharine, she still trusted that a little quiet would restore her to her usual state of health.

"My poor child!" she murmured after marking the listless air with which Katharine held her book, and how soon that book was laid aside, whilst a sadder expression came over her features, and tears began to fall un-

consciously. It was just such an evening as that before their departure;—it was the same room;—Mrs. Arnold, as then, was reclining on a sofa, but Katharine—how different was Katharine! The happy, hoping child, had returned the sorrowing, experienced woman. Little older in her looks—little older in her days—but oh how much older in her knowledge! Perhaps she too was thinking of the contrast.

Katharine started; wiped away the tears, which had come unbidden, and crossing the room knelt by her side as she had done before. But how did she cross the room? how did she look as the knelt beside her protectress? There was no bounding step—no brightness in her eye—no glow upon her cheek.

"My poor Kate! and have I done all this!—wrought you misery, when I thought to give you happiness."

"And have I not been happy? You must

not heed these tears. I shall be as I used to be in time—or very like it."

Mrs. Arnold shook her head.

"If not, I shall have none but myself to blame. Have I not now all that I had then? I will strive to forget that I desired more;—strive to look upon its loss as a chastening to be grateful for. You warned me that I made idols of all I loved—I fear I have. We will be happy again, dear mother, do not doubt it;—we will be all to each other. No, I am not making you an idol, as you would say, only loving you as you should be loved; and thinking how grateful!—how very grateful! I should be for all your care. What might I not have been, with none but that poor crazy woman for my guide?"

"If I were sure, Kate—quite sure,—that you never blamed me."

"Blame you?"

"No, not blame, that is too strong a word;

but thought—felt that had I left you in obscurity, or brought you up less delicately, you might not have known this trial."

"I never thought—I never felt this, even for one moment. Look into my eyes. I do not turn away: and I should do so if I told a falsehood. I know my birth may subject me to slights, and the child of your love, I feel those slights too deeply; but never did I feel aught but gratitude to you for all your kindness, all your care. Do not think me ungrateful:—I am not that—I cannot be."

"I never thought you so; and now you have removed the only doubt which pressed upon my heart; your love has ever been a blessing. We will be happy in each other—thankful for our meeting—thankful for our many years of peace and joy; but having brought you up so delicately, I must take heed that your tastes receive no shock. Write to Mr. Payne, requesting him to call on me to-morrow morning: I must make a new

will directly—I should have done it long ago."

Katharine playfully remonstrated if the will was to be in her favor, but Mrs. Arnold would hear of no delay; something like a presentiment weighed upon her, and she wished to make all requisite arrangements before the arrival of the Millars. If she could not shield her favorite from the effects of low birth, she would, at least, not subject her to bear the pains and penalties of poverty, with all the tastes and habits of expence. Who would turn out a cherished exotic into the frost and snow of January?

Complaining of fatigue, Mrs. Arnold retired early, after a more than usually affectionate embrace, and blessing.

Poor Katharine wept herself to sleep, little thinking that she might have greater cause for sorrow, ere night came round again.

CHAPTER II.

" Till one stern stroke of all my state,
Of all my bliss bereft me,
And I was worse than desolate.—
Dale.

It was late before Katharine fell asleep; and it was late before she awoke: and that not quietly and naturally, but roused by a bustle in the house, and with strong fear upon her mind.

She sprang to the door.

" What is the matter?" she enquired of the housekeeper, who was sobbing in the passage.

" My mistress! oh my poor mistress!"

Katharine staid to hear no more;—in another instant she was in Mrs. Arnold's room bending over her—pressing her lips to hers—speaking to her in the tones of endearment.

At those loving words the sufferer revived and rather turned towards her: whilst a servant putting aside the curtain at the moment, the full morning light streamed in upon the bed. The affectionate girl turning deadly pale, with difficulty suppressed a cry of pain; and would have sunk on the floor, had not Mrs. Shaw at the instant caught her in her arms. Those placid features were distorted—the mouth was drawn on one side—the eyes had a wild, bewildered look—the voice was harsh and indistinct—and one side completely paralyzed. Thus had Mrs. Shaw found her respected mistress, on entering her room rather later than usual. The means pursued by the family physician, who had been immediately sent for, restored Mrs. Arnold to a

clearer degree of consciousness; but with that consciousness came anxiety. The paralytic stroke had been a severe one: her medical attendant shook his head and spoke doubtingly to Mrs. Shaw, though concealing his fears from the weeping Katharine. She might linger—she might have a second seizure immediately—the great thing was to keep her perfectly quiet, and free from anxiety; he even talked of banishing Kate from the room, but Kate hushed her sobs, and the sufferer so pined for her presence that he thought it most prudent to allow her to remain. They might and did prevent all noise, but to keep Mrs. Arnold free from anxiety was beyond their power. There was some desire in her mind so strong that till that was accomplished she could know no rest; and her distress increased when she found the difficulty of making her wishes understood. Perhaps there are few situations more distressing than when affection strives, but in vain, to understand

and fulfil the wishes of the object of its regard, the mind being too confused, the speech too much affected to admit of clearness in thought or expression: whilst the sufferer, unconscious of the failing of her own powers, only reads their inefficiency in the bewildered looks and mistakes of her attendants; and at length yields to the suspicion that there is no longer the desire to accomplish those wishes, or the quick eye of love would read them. What a harrowing history, if the tongue could tell!—or the hand could trace! The very anxiety to be, and annoyance at not being, understood increasing the difficulty of explanation, and the danger of a relapse.

Katharine's eager love and quickness of apprehension saved Mrs. Arnold from much of this annoyance, and at length enabled her to comprehend that the sufferer's most anxious desire was to see Mr. Payne, and the Millars on the subject of her will. By the advice of the physician Katharine promised that she

should see either, or both on their arrival; and tranquilised by the promise, Mrs. Arnold sank into a quiet sleep, holding the hand of her adopted child in one of hers. Dr. Potter left her with greater hopes, to attend another patient, engaging to return and spend the night at Beechen Cliff.

Mrs. Arnold awoke considerably refreshed and with clearer ideas, and more distinct speech. Her first question was for the lawyer; and her attendants, finding her mind set on transacting business were obliged to tell her that he could not see her that day, nor probably for some days to come. In truth he was then lying at the point of death, from injuries received by a fall from his horse the night before. The intelligence appeared to annoy her; and she murmured something about sending for some one else, but named none in particular; then learning that the Millars had arrived, she requested to see them immediately.

The physician insisted that the interview should be very short; and so it was, scarcely more than ten minutes: but that it had been satisfactory was proved by the sufferer's look and manner:—earthly anxieties seemed set at rest; and she was all patient submission to the will of Heaven.

"You look so much better, my own dear mamma; and will soon I trust be yourself again," exclaimed the sanguine and affectionate Katharine, kissing her pale cheek.

Mrs. Arnold pressed her hand; smiled a sweet, sad smile—murmured that she was satisfied, since her child's future fortunes were provided for; and then, fatigued with explaining her wishes to the Millars, sank again into a quiet slumber.

Nothing could induce Katharine to leave her side; indeed the mere endeavour to remove her hand made the sufferer restless, so Dr. Potter allowed her to remain, admiring the fortitude with which she subdued her emotion

but trembling for her health when the shock should come, as come it must, he feared before the morning. And the shock did come that very night.

The patient sufferer stirred with an indistinct murmur, as of pain;—Katharine bent eagerly over her to learn her wish.—The physician and nurse advanced with a candle:—the glaring eyes winked slightly at the light, and then were fixed:—the lips moved, and then were still. Dr. Potter felt the pulse; put the hand gently down, and looked at the nurse, who returned the glance. Katharine caught that look;—for months it was before her with its fearful tale.

"No! No! it cannot be!" she exclaimed with vehemence.

"Let me entreat you to retire," said the physician kindly.

"No! No! leave me with her!" she cried, twining her arms round the senseless body, as she spoke.

It was not till many days after the funeral that Katharine was even well enough to leave her bed. The shock, acting on a frame weakened by mental suffering, had been still more severe than the physician had anticipated; and for some time her life hung on a thread. Weeks passed before she was well enough to walk alone to her friend's grave.

The Millars, who seemed anxious for her restoration to health, tried to dissuade her from the attempt; but she said, and said truly that it would be a consolation. From that time she mended more rapidly: and though her childlike gaiety was gone, perhaps never to return, she was calm and patient, striving by occupation and attention to the wants of others to overcome the listlessness succeeding a long illness, and that carelessness of life, following the loss of all we prize on earth. And she had truly lost all that she prized on earth—the only one who loved her—her sole link to human kind, save the dependants of

her late protectress, who still pitied and respected her. But she had not felt this desolation, as she was to feel it;—she had sometimes regretted that though the Millars meant to be kind there was not more sympathy between them:—she did not as yet know that they had scarcely one thought in common.

More than three months had elapsed since Mrs. Arnold's death, and Katharine was sitting at work in her own little room, striving to acquire cheerfulness, yet, despite herself, fretting at some little alterations which showed to her delicate affection a want of feeling towards the dead, when Mrs. Millar entered, and after some preliminary discourse touched on the object of her visit.

"I am glad to see you so much better Miss Darrell. Mrs. Arnold's death must of course be a great loss; but with the education which you have received, you can find no difficulty in providing for yourself, and for her sake, I shall be most happy to further your wishes.

May I ask what plans you have formed; and whither you intend to go on leaving Beechen Cliff?"

"Leave Beechen Cliff!" exclaimed poor Kate in grief and surprise, such an idea never having entered her mind.

"It will be painful to you, that is natural; and we have no wish to hurry your departure; indeed, are sorry that our large family prevents our asking you always to remain with us," remarked Mrs. Millar with a flushed cheek, looking away as she spoke.

"Am I to understand then, madam, that I have no right to remain at Beechen Cliff; and that you wish me to remove?" asked the poor girl listening to her reply with breathless anxiety.

"Certainly;" said Mrs. Millar with a still averted head. "Your name is not mentioned in Mrs. Arnold's will, though made sometime after your residence with her: the whole of her property, with the exception of some

legacies, to old servants, and charitable bequests, is left to my husband."

Katharine gasped for breath; and then burying her face in her hands, burst into a passion of tears.

Leave Beechen Cliff where she had been so happy!—Where she had lived, whom she had so fondly loved!—whom she could almost fancy present, though unseen, and go to a new place, where there would be no loving memories—where all would seem so cold, and strange! It was like losing another friend:—this was to be desolate indeed!

"We will talk of this some other time," said Mrs. Millar more kindly, rising to go.

"No, madam, now: let me know all at once;" sobbed Kate striving to control her emotion.

"What would you wish to know?" asked Mrs. Millar coldly.

"The old servants—must they go too?" asked Katharine.

"Not before the end of the year, if they choose to remain till then: they are to receive a twelvemonth's wages and legacies besides. They ought to think themselves well off, for some are nearly passed their work, and yet I understand they grumble. I am sorry to say, there is very little gratitude among dependants now-a-day. Shaw and Carter, I hear, are married, and living like lady and gentleman on what they made out of their over indulgent mistress: no wonder she did not choose to wait till the end of the year. I think it a duty to look after my servants."

"The honesty and attachment of Shaw and Carter were ever beyond a doubt," remarked Katharine with spirit, indignant at the insinuation.

"All are not agreed on that point, and I am not bound to be of the same opinion as Miss Darrell, I conclude. But I did not come

here to discuss the characters of servants; I came to know if I could assist you in your future plans."

"I have formed no plans, having understood from my more than mother that she had enabled me to live on in that style to which she had accustomed me."

"She may have thought of so doing, but there is the will to prove that she never did it. You can see it any day if you still doubt; Mr. Bennett, Mr. Payne's successor, has it in his hands."

"I cannot doubt you, madam; but it is most strange! Even after her last interview with you," and her voice faltered as she thought how soon that interview had been succeeded by her death, "I learned from her broken words, which I little heeded then, that Beechen Cliff would still be mine."

"Really, Miss Darrell, this is a most extraordinary statement!" and the speaker's cheek flushed a deeper crimson. "It is impossible

for me to say what Mrs. Arnold, confused as was her intellect, may have intimated to you, though I am more inclined to think you must have misunderstood her indistinct, and broken speech. She certainly spoke of you to us, as I was going to tell you, not having entered on the subject before, from your indulging in such paroxysms of grief if I but named your benefactress. Moderate sorrow would have been commendable, for, of course, you cannot be sufficiently grateful to Mrs. Arnold for taking you from the parish, and giving you an education by which you may support yourself; but I cannot approve of the violent grief to which you have given way ever since her death, thus rendering yourself incapable of exerting your talents. She was naturally anxious to see us, as being the nearest relatives of her husband, from whom she received her wealth, though that wealth is not what might have been expected, having been sadly squandered; and, after saying many flattering things

to Mr. Millar, she recommended you to our care, begging us to be kind to you, which we promised;—and will perform, as long as you fulfil my poor aunt's good opinion. We have allowed you to remain here for many months with this apartment all to yourself, though with my large family, there is not much space in the house; and the room is wanted for the governess. Besides this, Mr. Millar has paid the enormous expences caused by your long illness and intends to give you two hundred pounds."

She paused; but as Katharine offered no thanks she continued.

"It shall be paid when you leave us. Perhaps you would like to set up a milliner's shop: or something else of the kind, as you work so nicely; in which case I would recommend you to my friends, though you had better not set up in this neighbourhood I should think, as you might not find it pleasant."

"I have no intention of setting up a mil-

liner's shop anywhere; and will not trouble you, madam, to recommend me to your friends," replied Katharine rather proudly, thinking how this very person had formerly spoken of her to Mrs. Arnold; always, in her letters, terming her that dear child, and sending loves, and presents.

"Just as you please. I dare say you may succeed as a governess, or companion; for all may not require, as I do for my children, a person who has been abroad, and speaks French and Italian as a native, besides being a superior musician. I may be rather too particular. One is obliged to educate one's daughters so highly in the present day that they come nearly as expensive as sons; but no doubt, you will soon get a situation. You had better write to your friends immediately if you have not done so already."

"I have no friends."

Again Mrs. Millar turned away, as if touched by the speaker's look and tone.

"Poor girl! This comes of bringing up people above their station. I will write to some of my friends, and see what can be done; and you may stay here a little longer; for we do not want you to go directly, only you really must not encourage your grief, or you will be fit for nothing; just as useless as you have been these last four months. It is a duty to keep up your spirits."

The door closed behind Mrs. Millar without her receiving any reply.

Her communication had been so totally unexpected that the startled Katharine had not at first fully comprehended it; but as she saw her meaning clearer, the crimson flush deepened on her cheek, then died away, as indignation yielded to despair. Now was she desolate indeed! She looked round the little room so tastefully arranged—her own peculiar room for some years past—her eye resting on each object as though to note its worth in the memory; and then she looked out on the

garden, the lawn, the shrubbery, and the wood beyond, unconscious, till this moment, how closely they were twined around her heart. An iron band seemed bound across her brow —her eye balls ached with her eager looking —the voice of the old gardener came to her from below; and that familiar sound bursting the spell that had held her tears, she bowed her face upon her hands and wept long and bitterly, till relieved by this gush of woe, she tried to think of her future plans. Leave Beechen Cliff she must, and quickly too:—but whither should she go? She had no friend —no relative, but a crazy mother, wandering she knew not whither. You might range the world and scarcely find so lone—so desolate a being. Mrs. Arnold had associated with no one in her own neighbourhood but the Etheringtons; they were gone—and she knew no others, but those whom she had met at Sallowfield.

Sallowfield!—she trembled at the thought.

Would that she had never known it! The wish was idle; and she would not think of what she had so long been striving to forget.

It was strange that Mrs. Arnold, after all her declarations should have left her destitute: but as Mrs. Millar said, there was the will to prove it. Did she blame Mrs. Arnold? Not for one moment! She decided that that lady's anxiety to see Mr. Payne had been for the purpose of providing for her; and finding that impossible, she had recommended her to the care of the Millars, believing them to be, far other than they were. But however satisfied of the intentions of her kind protectress, those intentions not having been fulfilled, she saw the necessity of seeking an independance; and then the question came—how was this to be done? She had replied on the instant to Mrs. Millar that she had no friends, but there were some who, she doubted not, would assist her, though she felt some little delicacy in

applying to them; and these were the Banhams.

When sufficiently recovered to read it, a letter from Mrs. Banham had been put into her hand condoling with her on the loss of her benefactress, offering her services in any way, and inviting her to Sallowfield for change of air. It was just such a letter as she should have expected—so kind—so affectionate—so full of regret for the loss of her old friend;—and so full of friendly offers to her young one; and if she had put in rather marked remembrances from her son in the postcript, Katharine had excused it on account of a parent's love; but it was this very postcript which made her hesitate to claim the fulfilment of Mrs. Banham's friendly offers. She had answered this letter as soon as equal to the task, and had not heard since; but she had no scruple of ceremony with the warm hearted mistress of Sallowfield, and only hesitated [illegible] the fear that there might be some awk-

wardness about Mr. George; or that she might in return receive a more pressing invitation. This last she could scarcely refuse if warmly pressed; yet to revisit Sallowfield at present would be to disturb that quiet which she had so hardly gained. There was however no alternative; so the letter was written, every particular fully explained, and Mrs. Banham requested to exert her influence in procuring her a situation, and to advise her as to her future plans.

It may seem strange that Katharine should not before have learnt, that she was a beggar: but her youth, her ignorance of business, and the little selfishness of her character may account for her want of knowledge in this respect. True, when nearly restored to health, she saw Mr. Millar take on himself to command and controul, in a manner that did not please her; but being under age, she concluded that he was her guardian, and knowing Mrs. Arnold's high opinion of his merits

hesitated at offering any remonstrance, or asking any question. She might incidentally have learnt the truth from others, but glad to be alone, she seldom left her room; and the old servants, whom she sometimes saw, did not touch on the subject, fearing to pain her, though the point was freely and frequently discussed among themselves, and more than one doubt expressed as to the validity of the will. Nay, the prim Mrs. Shaw before her departure, which had not taken place till Kate was well enough to dispense with her nursing, was not satisfied till she had obtained a sight of the will from Mr. Bennett, and consulted him as to its legality. Alas! its legality could not be disputed; and here was another warning of the danger of procrastination. Mrs. Arnold, though feeling the misery to which poverty would subject one brought up like Katharine in every elegance, till the luxuries of refinement had become absolute necessaries, had deferred altering her will from day to day,

till no longer time was given; her only excuse, and that very excuse proving her dangerous habit of delay, that she could not make up her mind as to the exact distribution of her property, the chance of Katharine's marriage causing some alteration in her wishes.

CHAPTER III.

" Call you me daughter?"
Taming of the Shrew.

Adam—But do not so; I have five hundred crowns,
The thrifty hire I served under your father,
Take that; and he that doth the ravens feed,
Yea providently caters for the sparrow,
Be comfort to my age; here is the gold,
All this I give you, let me be your servant.
As you like it.

DAY by day, hour by hour, did Katharine see more clearly that her presence was unwelcome in that house where she had heretofore been a petted favorite; and day by day, and hour by hour, did she become more anxious for the means of departure: but Mrs.

Millar heard of no situation, though she had made many enquiries; and no letter arrived from Sallowfield.

The Banhams may be from home thought Katharine; and thus she tried to comfort herself for the delay. She might, and did, at times, give way to a feeling of despair, when she thought of her desolate state; but she was not the fretful, profitless sorrower Mrs. Millar had represented. She certainly trembled at the thought of entering into a world of which she knew so little, without one kind friend to guide or protect her; but she saw at once that it was her duty: and she prayed for strength to enable her to fulfil it.

The day was fine for the season—early spring—and Kate set off for a walk, hoping that the fresh, pure air would drive away one of those headaches which now so frequently oppressed her. Avoiding the village, she chose a path leading to the top of a steep hill, partially covered with brush wood, inter-

spersed with forest trees; and crowned with the rather picturesque ruins of an old windmill half hid in ivy. It had been a favorite haunt in childhood, and she wished to visit it once more. She had nearly reached the top, when, on turning round a thicket, a figure started up before her, whose fantastic dress and singular manner could not be mistaken—it was crazy Nan! Kate shrank back distressed and alarmed, as she thought of their last meeting, and clung to a tree for support. Perfectly unconscious how unwelcome was her presence, Nan Darrell advanced towards her daughter with her usual mincing step, and ludicrous attempt at dignity.

"So you are come to me, because he would not let me go to you. But what are you in black for? I don't like black. And they won't make you a lady, I hear;—but they should though if I had been there; ay, and they shall yet—let him say what he will!" she exclaimed, looking round, with a half daring,

and half timid glance. "Little Kate shall be a lady! I said so—and so it shall be. And I'll dance at the wedding:—I can dance very well. Then I shall be a lady too; and we'll go to court and see the queen. She will be glad to see us, I fancy, and want our handsome dresses. And the king shall hand us about. Don't tell," drawing closer to Kate, "the king wants to make me queen;—but I won't say yes, for *he* would not like it; but you shall go to court, let him scold ever so.—Come with me, and I'll show you something; but make haste, for if he should come back he will be angry;" and seizing Kate's arm, she began dragging her up the hill to her increasing alarm, till observing some men at a little distance, whom a call would summon to her aid, she thought it best to humour the poor crazy creature, who, however distressing the thought, was still her mother.

"Look here, Kate! pretty is not it?" she asked, drawing from under her cloak a small

bundle covered with a tawdry handkerchief, and showing it to Katharine, whom she had dragged with breathless speed up the steep hill into the ruined windmill. "But there is something better than that here," she added, whispering in her ear, after throwing a keen look around. "If all these stones were gold," turning over one as she spoke, "here is something that you would like much better."

"Indeed! What is it?" asked her daughter, whose curiosity was half awakened by the poor creature's earnest manner.

"Ah! what is it indeed? Nobody else knows; but I know. Look," unfolding the outer, dirty handkerchief, and holding it so that the light fell full upon its gaudy colours.

"Fit for a queen, is not it? And I shall be a queen soon," looking mysteriously. "And see here!" unfolding another nearly as fine: "I get a good many of these things:—people give them to me that I may make them lords and ladies when I am queen;—but I won't

though: for they laugh, and call me crazy Nan;" and a frown came on her brow. "They cannot bear to see me so handsome; but I am a lady in my own light, and ladies should be handsome."

"Have you nothing else in the bundle?" questioned Kate, her curiosity sorely disappointed.

"Nothing else? Don't you see another handkerchief? Do you think I have only one or two? Pretty thing for the Queen of England to have but two handkerchiefs, when I shall ride in a coach and six one of these days; and have twelve footmen behind!"

Kate reached towards the bundle; but her mother snatched it away with an angry gesture, raising her hand, stamping her foot, and giving way to a burst of mingled rage, and grief.

"So you would rob your mother, and be her death? But you shan't have it. Poor

Nan! Every one robs Nan Darrell—no one is kind to poor Nan."

"I will be kind to you," said Kate, moved almost to tears by the sorrowful tone in which the last few words were spoken.

"Will you? And will you give me a new gown as handsome as this? and a gold ring?" asked the poor creature eagerly.

And this wretched being, whose vanity and love of finery had survived the wreck of many a better feeling was her mother! Katharine burst into a passion of tears, and turned away.

"Kate! poor Kate! Good little Kate! Don't cry, and I'll make you a lady yet;" said Nan affectionately, patting her softly on the back.

These kindly words at once won a place for the speaker in the warm heart of her child, who had so seldom of late heard the tones of affection; and bitterly did she reproach herself for the terror, the almost loathing, with

which she had hitherto regarded this poor creature, who, amid all the vagaries of her vanity, had still some soft and motherly feelings.

"Don't cry, Kate, and I'll show you:—but no—I must not—he won't let me," continued Nan, shaking her head; the fear of some one whom she never named, seeming to struggle with her pity: "but I'll give you this;" holding out the handkerchief, which she so much prized, though evidently reluctant to part with it, putting it on Katharine, smoothing it down, and uttering exclamations at its beauty.

In the midst of her tears, and in the full flow of her gratitude for the crazy creature's kindness, Katharine could not repress a smile at her ludicrous demonstrations of admiration, or her own appearance, as far as she could observe it, with the red and yellow rag smoothed over her black dress. Drying her tears she spoke soothingly to poor Nan, thanking her warmly for her intended kindness, but evi-

dently pleasing her still more by declining the handkerchief, which appeared to be an especial favorite with its owner.

"Good girl, Kate;" folding up the flaunting rag most carefully, "Good girl! you shall be a lady yet; but you must not have this—not till I die, mind; and then I leave it to you;" holding the bundle very tight, of which she fancied Katharine still showed some wish to take possession.

"You need not fear, I will not touch it; I only wanted to know what was in it."

"Strange thing! beautiful things!" said Nan, speaking low and mysteriously, with keen and hurried glances round. "What will make you a lady!—a silver sixpence with a hole in it to keep you safe;—and — but no, I'll not tell you; or you will rob me; and then he will kill me," putting it behind her, notwithstanding Katharine's protestations that she had no desire for its possession. Then changing her mood, she exclaimed abruptly;—

"But the sun is going down, and I have not done what I came here for:—I don't always say what I mean—or do what I would. Poor Nan! she is not what she was, and people laugh;—and the boys shout there goes 'Crazy Nan!" Ah! they won't do so when I am queen; but I must make haste now, or he will come and take it from me. He shan't have it though," she added passionately, setting her teeth as she spoke. "He shall do all else he likes; but he shan't have this, I give it you—but not till I am dead, or he will be angry with me. Now look at me, and mind;" and Katharine did look at her, wondering at her actions.

Pulling an old knife from her pocket she groped with it round a tolerable sized stone imbedded in the earth, which, after some time, she succeeded in raising; thus displaying a space beneath, rough stones also imbedded, forming its sides. The hole appeared to have been used as a secret treasure house by crazy

Nan before, to judge from some odd articles and a small bundle lying therein. Looking at these as if to ascertain that nothing had been taken away, she deposited the new parcel in the open space, closing it over as before, and trampling the earth till no sign remained of that stone's having been recently raised.

"Mind this place!—but don't come till I am dead—or give you leave; or he will kill me:—and be sure and tell no one. And now come along, for fear he should suspect," she exclaimed, seizing her arm, and dragging her down the hill as she had dragged her up, till they had nearly reached the base, when she let go her grasp, and leant against a tree to recover breath.

"What do you do here? Did not I tell you not to seek the girl?" questioned a harsh voice close to Nan, who started, trembled, and then endeavoured to explain that the meeting with Katharine had been accidental.

"I told you not to go near Beechen Cliff;" observed the former speaker, an ill looking

man with marked features, stepping from behind a thicket into Katharine's view, and fixing his keen eyes full upon her.

"I did not go there, Kate came this way," said the woman submissively.

"You should not have been near here;" was his harsh reply. "And what has that crazy woman been saying to you?" he demanded of Katharine, placing himself so directly in her path that she could not proceed.

Displeased and half alarmed, Katharine would have shown her displeasure, and insisted on his letting her pass, but comprehending the pleading gestures of Nan, exhibited behind his back, she answered with conciliating gentleness.

"She talked in her usual wild way, something about being a queen."

"A queen!" he repeated scornfully. "But what did you come to meet her for?"

"I did not even know that she was in the neighbourhood; and we met by accident as

she says. Let me pass!" she added, disliking his manner more and more; but she was not to have her way thus easily.

"You shall pass when I please, and not before; I am not to be frightened by your lady airs."

"Detain me, and I call to those men on the hill," replied Katharine, indignant at his insolence.

"Ho! Ho! you have a fine high spirit, girl; but so have I; and you stir not till it pleases me. Come, come: no drawing back with that proud air, and no squalling;—I am your father!"

"It is false!" exclaimed Katharine quickly.

"It is true! Nan tell the girl that I am her father."

"Yes, Kate; he is my husband:—he is indeed:" she repeated eagerly, seeing her still incredulous.

"Impossible! your husband has been dead for years."

"Not dead, or like to die; though there are those who wish me so, yourself among the number as I see. I won't hurt you, if you don't thwart me; but give me no lady tantrums. Who cares what crazy Nan says?" he observed, looking sharply round at his wife, who cowered beneath his glance, saying in a deprecating tone:

"I did not tell her any thing."

"So much the better for both. You see the girl is not to be a lady."

The crazy woman did not contradict him in words; but made a sign of dissent behind his back.

Her manner, ever since her husband's appearance, had been a strange mingling of love and fear. It was evident that he held his rule over her by both these passions, but from the harshness of his demeanour it seemed more than probable that the love was solely on her side, that holy feeling which lingers long in

woman's heart, outliving coldness, scorn, and cruelty.

Katharine made no remark, assertion, or countersign; but shocked and alarmed at the discovery of such a father; striving to disbelieve, yet compelled to credit the fearful truth, leant against a tree pale and faint, till the man's rude questioning enforced an answer.

"So the proud Mrs. Morven would not have you for a daughter, nor the dandy Earl for a wife. There are wise people in the world!—If James Darrell said it should be done—it should. It is a pity you are not my lady, you could then do something for your father and mother, and now you are of no use; for I hear that mincing Mrs. Arnold, with all her pretty promises, has left you nothing. Is it so?"

"Yes," replied Katharine, in a low voice.

"My curse be upon her!" cried her father fiercely, gnashing his teeth.

"Say not so! she was ever kind;—to her I am indebted for being what I am."

"Ah! what you are indeed;—and there is her shame;—a poor little, weakly thing, frightened because your father looks at you. How are you to gain your bread, as you must, with those fine lady airs, I should like to know?"

"I cannot tell."

"No, nor any one else. Are you to stay on at the house there with that mean fellow Millar?"

"No; I only wait till I can procure a situation."

"A situation! Scullion, I suppose. That mean wretch should have provided for you and yours;—and he shall too!"—he added, coming close up to her in the energy of his wrath.

A faint exclamation from Katharine caused him to turn. Two horsemen had come upon

them unobserved, owing to the softness of the turf over which they had ridden, and the attention of all three having been engaged in the subject of their discourse. The foremost, a gentleman, looked inquisitively at Katharine after a glance at her companions, making her an ironical bow, which she returned, moving a step towards him as if to claim his protection; then remembering that those from whom she was on the point of seeking his protection were her parents, she stopped abruptly, pained and embarrassed. The gentleman—Mr. Millar—hesitated a moment, and then rode on followed by his servant.

"My curse upon him! I will have something yet," muttered Darrell, clenching his fist, and looking after the horsemen, though he had shrunk back in their presence. "It is time we were off;" he said abruptly, after a short pause. "We must be many miles away before dusk; and sleep at R— to-night: there, you may go now, girl;—but say nothing of

having seen me, or your mother. Mind this —for I shall have an eye upon you."

"Good bye, Kate! you shall be a lady yet,' whispered crazy Nan.

"What are you prating to the girl about? Come along," exclaimed her husband fiercely: and Nan followed on the instant, with a quiet and submissive air, never once thinking of displaying her ragged finery. Could love for one so harsh overpower her usual waywardness and vanity? Who shall fathom the human heart? It was not fear alone which induced her submission; and if more quiet in action whilst with him she also appeared more clear in thought.

Pale and agitated Katharine reached Beechen Cliff; and here another disappointment came to bow her drooping spirit:—she found an answer from Mrs. Banham. She had need of consolation: but there was none in that letter.—She might have spared herself the anticipated pain of a visit to Sallowfield:—the

letter was coldly civil. "Mrs.Banham was sorry to learn her distressing situation, and would inform her should she hear of any thing likely to suit her, highly approving of her intention of gaining her own livelihood, such being clearly her duty. With every good wish, Mrs. Banham remained her's truly, &c." Not one word of George in a postcript as before. Could this be the kind, the warm hearted Mrs. Banham? And no message from her daughters, who had professed such devoted friendship! The conduct of the Millars and the numerous slights to which she had of late been subject taught Katharine to read the meaning of this letter at a thought. Mrs. Banham and her family threw her off at once;—threw off the fair young creature whom they had so lately petted and caressed, the favorite of their dear—their very dear Mrs. Arnold.

To whom could Katharine now look? She had none on earth to whom to look. Whither could she go? She had no earthly home

wherein to rest. And that dark, and harsh, and evil looking man her father!—and that poor crazy thing her mother, claiming the love and duty of a child!—and she could give them neither without shuddering.

There is one who careth for the poor, and helpless orphan; and to him she looked and prayed.

It was long ere sleep closed her aching eyes; and then worn out with woe and weeping, she slept dully, heavily, without a dream—so heavily that she woke not despite the hubbub in the house, till one of the maids came in to tell the news, wondering at her long slumber, yet delighted to find an ignorant and sufficiently astonished listener. The news was quickly told. Thieves had entered the house during the night, carrying off plate and other articles of considerable value without having disturbed any of the family, or left a clue by which they might be traced. The kitchen maid, the earliest riser, had been the first to

perceive the robbery, and give the alarm. The more minute the investigation, the more were the examiners convinced that the theft had been planned, effected, or assisted by some one well acquainted with the house, and the household arrangements. Katharine's bed room was so near the principal scene of the robbery, that many marvelled at her not having been awakened.

"Mr. Millar desires to see you in the library;" was the unceremonious message delivered almost before the completion of her toilet.

Mr. Millar was seated in a large chair looking very grand and severe, when Katharine entered; and he neither rose, nor wished her good morning, but motioned her by a haughty wave of the hand to stand before him. If he thought by this to awe her, he was mistaken; colouring slightly at his rudeness, she took a seat at a little distance, remarking with quiet dignity that she understood he wished to speak

with her. Annoyed at her self possession, he endeavoured to assume a grander air, resolved to crush her at once by his vast superiority. What right had a mere girl with a mother a crazy pauper, and a father perhaps something worse, to be self possessed in the presence of a man with thousands a year, and who had acquired some of those magnificent ideas which are soon learnt in India? His proud and pompous tone should have appalled a delinquent.

"I never condemn without enquiry, that is not my way; but I sift all to the last grain; and never rest till I have found out the truth. So I did in India—so I will do in England. The natives knew it was in vain to attempt to deceive me; and the English will find the same. Who were the man and woman with whom I saw you yesterday? Ha! you are confounded—you give me no answer. Better, for your own sake, tell the truth; I may then be merciful," he added, eyeing her keenly, but with nothing of mercy in his look.

"I do not understand you, sir," replied Katharine proudly, indignant at his overbearing manner; and not admitting his right to put a question, which, as he truly said, had embarrassed her; for, setting aside the startling abruptness of that question, she could not think of Nan Darrell and her husband, particularly the latter, as her parents without trembling; and to name them as such to another was still more distressing.

"Not understand me, Katharine Darrell? You are no fool, though you may think it pretty to put on a simple, childish manner; nor do I speak so foolishly that you cannot comprehend me. I ask a plain question—a very plain one. Who were that man and woman with whom I saw you yesterday?"

"My parents; though I know not by what right you ask."

"Your parents! A worthy object for my aunt's protection truly! I marvel she did not found an asylum for the children of felons.

No wonder that you were ashamed to own them."

"Mrs. Arnold's kindness was extended where kindness was most needed; and gratitude should save her memory from your censure."

The rich, proud man shrank from the look of the poor, simple girl before him.

"It is not strange that Mrs. Arnold should give back the money gained by her husband to her husband's family; but it is something singular her bringing up the child of such parents; and it would have been much better if among her other lessons she had taught humility."

"She did teach it, Mr. Millar, by precept and example: lay not any fault on her. If I speak warmly in her defence it is because, owing her so much, I cannot bear to hear reproach upon her memory. You have her wealth—leave me my gratitude."

"You mistake, young woman; I never

meant to reproach my aunt. I sent for you to ask of those strangers; and we will confine our conversation to that point."

"That point is painful; therefore, having no right to question, you will allow me to retire."

"Painful! I thought as much;—but stop, if you please," for she had risen as they spoke. "I have a right to question; and insist on being answered. I am a magistrate—and it is in that capacity I question you."

"A magistrate! and question me?"

"A magistrate—and question you! And you may thank my pity that the examination is a private one; if you refuse to answer me, you must be questioned before others. Do you choose to reply?"

"I know not whether you have the right you claim, or only use an idle threat. With parents but so lately known—so different from those with whom I have been thrown for many years, it is natural that the subject

should be painful; nor can I guess why you would question me of them: but knowing nothing I could wish concealed, I shall not refuse to give the information you require."

"Wisely resolved, though a more humble demeanour would befit you better. Who are your parents?"

"James, and Ann Darrell."

"Where do they live?"

"I cannot tell. Till yesterday I did not even know I had a father:—my mother has no fixed abode."

Mr. Millar looked incredulous and angry.

"Take care! I must have candid answers; or shall be compelled to proceed to extremities."

"My answers are candid; though only given to Mrs. Arnold's nephew for her sake."

"You are very considerate," he remarked

with a sneer. "How long have your worthy parents been in the neighbourhood?"

"I know not: I only saw them yesterday."

"Whither are they going?"

"I heard them say they must be many miles away ere dark, and sleep at R——— last night."

"When are you to see them again."

"Never, I hope!" rose to her lips, but, checking the undutiful reply, she merely said, "We did not speak of a future meeting."

"A very prudent silence—or a very cunning answer. And pray what may this very pleasing looking father of yours be?"

"I do not know. And now I hope, for your sake and for mine, that this cruel interrogation is concluded.

"No, it is not concluded; and you may have to answer before others, who will put

more cruel interrogatories. You pretend not to know what your father is—then I will tell you:—he is a thief! a burglar! a midnight robber! and he shall be hanged, if I can catch him! Nay, girl, no fainting—and no folly:—no clasping of your hands—and looking angry and then shocked, as if I had told you some new thing. You know I only speak the truth."

"No! No! it cannot be! it is not the truth!" gasped Katharine denying as much to convince herself, as her hearer; for when she thought of her father's look, and threatening words, she was not quite so certain of his innocence, as she could wish; and the fearful suspicion so shocked and overcame her that she sank back in her chair, pale, faint, and scarcely able to understand the darker accusations which, unmoved by her sufferings, he poured forth on his helpless victim.

"It is the truth, girl! and you know it; though you act your part so well, that you

might deceive those who know not, as I know, how you twined round my aunt, till she believed you little short of angel. I repeat—it is the truth! The villain was seen skulking about here early yesterday morning, and late last night; and is now nowhere to be found. I myself saw you talking to him, and you looked frightened and ashamed when I came in sight. The thieves must have been assisted by some one well acquainted with the premises—you gave no alarm, though their entering the room immediately below yours must have awakened you—you refuse to furnish an account of the comings, and goings of your honest parents:—Katharine Darrell, you are an accomplice!"

Poor Kate! the appearance of fortitude which she had with difficulty maintained, during this trying interview, gave way at this dreadful accusation. She felt at a thought, indignant as she was, all the horrors of her situation; poor, friendless—with such parents

—and with such a foe as her pitiless accuser. Uttering a faint scream, she dropped senseless from her chair.

On recovering, she found herself lying on her bed; Mrs. Millar's maid, a cold hearted, supercilious, fine lady, applying restoratives, little caring whether they were effectual, or not.

"You are well again now, so I may go," was her remark as Katharine stared wildly round the room; leaving the apartment the moment after, glad to escape a disagreeable office.

When the whole truth was clearly understood by the bewildered Kate, she sank back on the pillow with hysterical sobs. What would become of her? She the object of the tenderest love for so many years, shielded from every shock—nurtured delicately—shrinking with woman's sensitiveness from notice and publicity—was she to be dragged before a crowd of strangers, to answer to a dreadful

accusation? to become an object of wonder, curiosity, and contempt?—to be associated in the public mind with those from the idea of whose relationship she shrank with disgust, and horror?—called on to stand a trial with a father, whose very look and manner told of guilt—or obliged to give evidence against him?—if acquitted,—still with the shame and agony of trial?—if condemned?—she hid her face on the pillow to shut out the horrid vision; but it was still before her, in darkness, as in light. Her limbs shook, and the cold dew stood on her marble brow.

But Mr. Millar could not believe her guilty—would not bring such a charge against the adopted child of his aunt—would not really think her leagued with wicked men to rob that house, which had so long been her happy home. He would not persist in the accusation—he would not subject her to further shame. She would strive to hope:—but she thought of his looks and tone, when

he said, "Katharine Darrell, you are an accomplice," and her hope died away. From him she could expect no pity. From man she could not look for aid. She had no friend on earth!—she was alone! Then came the thought of Ermiston—of him whom she had so fondly, truly loved, to give a deeper pang. Had he but felt, as she had felt, how different had been her fate! Deeply did she feel

> "Not with her own heart's lovingness,
> Had she been loved again."

There was a low knocking at her chamber door. She checked her sobs as she best might; and bade the person enter, turning away, as her bidding was obeyed, unwilling that her sorrow should be looked on by an unfeeling eye, and expecting to hear some painful and insulting message.

She heard no message; but, after a few moments, came a sob as loud, as full of grief as had been her own. She turned to look on the

intruder. There stood Mrs. Shaw—the prim, the formal Mrs. Shaw, sobbing as a child sobs at its first deep grief.

Every distinction of late years was forgotten:—in an instant, she was in her arms, clinging round her neck as she used to cling around her in her childish days. She knew—she felt, she was not desolate—not quite alone:—she had still one friend left; and, humble as the world might deem that friend, she was to her worth all the treasures of the earth.

And who could ever have found fault again with Mrs. Shaw, for being prim, and formal, and prosy, and a little out of temper at times, who had heard her sobs as she clasped the poor desolate Kate to her heart, soothing, caressing her, as she had done in former days, even calling her her own dear little Kate in the emotion of the moment, without being shocked till afterwards at the impropriety? All this too not in ignorance of the charge

against her favorite, but knowing, and defying it, having been informed of it by Mr. Millar, who had at first refused her admission to Katharine, though she had come many miles on purpose to see her.

It was not long before Katharine was pouring out her sorrows to the sympathising Mrs. Shaw; who, notwithstanding her sympathy, it must be admitted, was regaining some of her primness, when no longer under the spell of a sudden and powerful emotion; but this very primness and particuliarity was most strongly developed in her increasing show of respect:—her delicate, her almost over scrupulous fear lest, inadvertently, she should awaken the idea that she was presuming in the slightest degree on the fallen fortunes of her whom she was addressing. With the petted favorite of Mrs. Arnold, and the supposed heiress of her wealth, Mrs. Shaw, though much attached, had occasionally found fault, and exhibited ill humour; but to Kate

Darrell, the poor, the friendless, the destitute, with a charge of felony hanging over her head, she was the most humble, the most respectful, yet the most affectionate of domestics.

It is great injustice to assert that delicacy of feeling is confined to the higher ranks, and is the offspring of refinement, and education; these may nourish, and increase, but they cannot give it. It is innate—the child of the untutored heart—the very essence of the beautiful:—chained to no climate—bounded to no rank.

We have seen the wealthy, those who thought themselves the great ones of the earth, take leave of those of fallen fortunes with undimmed eye, and steady voice, as though they knew not that there was cause for sorrow—guessed not that the heart was well nigh broken, and only stayed the expression of its grief that the cold gaze might not mock it. We have seen the lowly ones of earth, lowly in station, but how high in worth! part from

the same; and the lip could not speak for the heart's feeling; and the tears of the mourner repressed before lest the cold should mock, mingled with theirs. The first passed on with stately step, and a cold offer of future service: —the last plucked the only rose from the favorite tree, and placed it by the traveller's cloak with a trembling hand and quivering lip. They thought that the traveller would prize it as a memorial of a once happy home. That single rose—and its kind, and delicate giver can they ever be forgotten? If all the memories of misfortune were like that, who would not be unfortunate? What feeling so endearing, so ennobling, as gratitude? Even love though it may have more of beauty, and of brightness; is not so generous and so pure.

Before night Katharine was on her way to B—— with Mrs. Shaw, or rather Mrs. Carter, she having married the butler, the former footman at Cowford, as Mrs. Millar had said;

a charge of [illegible]

self. Of the means by which this cl
been effected Kate only clearly u
that Mrs. Carter had been the agent,
ing the Millars by her representat
they not only promised neither to mol
arine nor spread their suspicions, but
her the two hundred pounds of w
Millar had before spoken. In wh
the negociation had been carried
only be gathered from Mrs. Carter's
rigidity, and contemptous tone when
of the Millars, as she refused to
detail of the conversation.

" One thing only she would say, t

lady need not scruple taking the two hundred pounds, for they owed her much more. Words were not parchment, as she had learnt from Mr. Bennett,—or things would not be as they were."

When questioned further, Mrs. Carter only primmed up her lips, drew up her thin figure, and talked of prudence, discretion, and the uselessness of telling what could bring no good.

"She had heard the report of Katharine's intended removal, and thinking that her young lady might wish to be quiet for some time, she had made bold enough to come over to say that she had a small parlour and bed room at her house, which she should feel very proud if Miss Darrell would occupy, till she was tired of living in the same place. She could never rejoice enough at arriving when she did; for she verily believed Mr. Millar would hang her young mistress if he could."

By the evening of the next day Katharine

was quietly established in Mrs. Carter's parlour; she, and her worthy husband waiting on her, and, as much as was in their power, anticipating her wishes more readily, and respectfully, if possible, than in her days of prosperity: her only difficulty being to prevent them from providing many of the luxuries to which she had been accustomed, under the pretence of their having been made presents to themselves, and to induce Mrs. Carter to consider herself in the light of an esteemed, though humble friend, rather than as a mere servant; or the mistress of a lodging house.

Mr. Carter displayed the few silver spoons, and other articles, which the worthy couple had procured for the use of their lodger, to the best advantage; and, as much as possible, in the same order as she had been used to at Beechen Cliff, performing for her many little offices of servitude, which he would have refused to perform for another, as being beneath the dignity of an exbutler.

Mrs. Carter, in the like spirit, arranged every thing for the toilet on the model of what had been at Beechen Cliff:—called her—robed her—laid out—put away—made, and mended, just as she had done in former days, never once giving way, as of old, to the vagaries of a middling temper, at least, in Katharine's presence; though she did occasionally if vexed, hint to her husband, with a very dignified air, that but for his talking at Sallowfield no one might have known of Miss Darrell's birth; and she might then have been a rich Countess, intsead of a poor Miss.

"Not that it was any great loss to my mind, since he could give her up so easily," she would add. "I never liked him much; he seemed formal to me."

This reproach was always borne in silence, the culprit only proving his regret by redoubled care and attention.

There was only one grand point in which

Katharine and Mrs. Carter disagreed: and this after various discussions was carried in favor of the former; but it was long before the good woman would hear with any patience of her seeking a situation, or assist in her plans for procuring one.

"If Miss Darrell did not like the house;—and did not find things comfortable; and did not think she and her husband were respectable, or pleasant people to lodge with;—and did not like their ways; she could go away certainly—she had a right to go; and she was sure she would not try to keep her, against her will;" and away marched Mrs. Carter with an air that it would have puzzled a Siddons to have out-dignified, heedless of all Katharine's entreaties to remain, and listen to her explanations.

"You would not hear me in the parlour, Mrs. Carter, so I am come into the kitchen; and you will not turn me out," said Kate

placing her hand caressingly on her arm. "I do like the house, and above all Mr. and Mrs. Carter and all their ways;—strange if I did not, when they have proved themselves such generous friends;" she added her tears falling as she spoke. "Had I money to live here, I would not go away: and you must believe this, for it is true; but I have not the money, and must use those advantages which my more than mother gave me to acquire independence, if only to justify her kindness, and prove myself not quite unworthy of her love."

"You have quite money enough, if you would but stay," said Mrs. Carter eagerly; "there are the two hundred pounds."

"I owe much of that already; and as it cannot support me long, I must seek some situation before I have spent it all."

"You owe nothing;—I have paid every bill, and there is something left in the purse you gave me still; and we can put out the

two hundred pounds; and you can live upon the interest."

Katharine smiled through her tears at the kind device of her faithful servant.

"I am but a simpleton, dear Mrs. Carter, I admit; but I know a little more of the value of money than that. You forget that I often paid the bills, and settled the accounts. I know, as well as you do, that the interest of two hundred pounds, place it where you may, will hardly find my clothes; and I really am no fairy to live on the dew of the cowslip and the harebell; on the contrary, as you know, I am quite an epicure, and delight in the nice little dishes you provide me. Come now," caressing her playfully, though her tears fell all the while, "you must let me coax you into letting me have my own way, as you say I used to do when I was your little Kate. You have already done much more for me than I can ever repay;—but for you, I might have

been tried, perhaps condemned to a shameful death;" and she shuddered as she spoke:—"But for you, I should have been houseless, friendless; without money; or those articles I prize so highly, as her gift, and that you so boldly claimed and brought away. I might have been a poor, helpless crazy creature as my mother, for I felt madness coming over me. You took me from the cruel, and the cold, and nursed me into health; and now you must do more—help me to show the world, at least that part to whom my name is known, that I am no disgrace to Mrs. Arnold's teaching, and no idle upstart; but one grateful for the blessings of her childhood—grateful for the love, and tutoring of her benefactress, striving to walk through life to do that tutoring honor. Were I to do as you desire, I should pine day by day, beneath a consciousness of shame. You will let me have my will dear, dear nurse Shaw, as I used

to call you ?—and you will help me too?"

And after a while, kind Mrs. Carter did let her have her own way; and even assisted her in it; but not without occasional grumblings.

CHAPTER IV.

"The wild romance of life is done;
The real history begun."
"And one replied—
But not the voice she pined to hear."

TIME passed, and still Katharine Darrell was at Mrs. Carter's. It seemed as if young ladies no longer wanted to be instructed, or old ladies to be amused: no one required governess, teacher, or companion, at least, no one would employ Katharine in either capacity. She was too young, or too pretty; or

she could not do this—or she could not do that. In vain she protested that she could and would do every thing, for any thing;—then came the grand point—who would recommend her? Mrs. Carter might be a very respectable person in her station, but that was not exactly the station from which recommendations were expected. Besides the story of her match with Lord Ermiston having been broken off on account of the character of her mother; and her father being suspected of some share in the robbery at Beechen Cliff had been bruited abroad, so that no sooner was her name announced than the few who had thought of her for a moment backed out of the engagement as speedily as possible.

Poor Kate was well nigh in despair, when Mrs. Carter, seeing that her heart was set on success, after fidgetting and stammering for some time gave her to understand that she had that day received a letter from the widow of a cousin of hers, a man well to do in the

world, who wished her to look out for a young person, who could read to her, and write for her, keep the house, mend the linen, make up her caps, be always good tempered and willing—in short, one who would make herself useful in every way; and all, as the criers of murders say, for the small sum of—twenty pounds.

"Mrs. Carter was quite ashamed to offer this to Miss Darrell. She who had been brought up so delicately to go at a servant's wages,—to do more than a servant's work! But she saw that she was fretting herself ill at being idle; and she had heard that her cousin in law, whom she had never seen, was a very good sort of person."

The style of the letter, the requisitions in wholesale, and the salary in detail, did not promise well; but Kate considered it a duty to accept the situation, no other offering, and within a fortnight she was established with

Mrs. Dixon at T—— a dirty sea port town on the western coast.

Mr. Carter had escorted her down, his wife being too ill at the time to venture on the journey; and though even he, a not over penetrating and charitable person, could perceive that Mrs. Dixon was not Mrs. Arnold, he saw nothing in her conduct to himself or Katharine, during his short stay, to prevent his believing that the latter might be tolerably comfortable.

Tolerably comfortable! Poor Kate soon ceased to be of Mr. Carter's opinion; and her continuance in the situation, supporting its trials with silent patience, was an act of duty, rather than inclination;—the consequence of a constant struggle against discontent, not an impulse of pleasure or gratitude. Perhaps Mrs. Dixon did not at first mean to be unkind but with no taste in common with her companion, and with what might be called coarse

feelings, in contradistinction to fine ones, she was perpetually wounding and annoying her.

The widow of a merchant, as she called him (wholesale dealer would have been more correct,) and possessed at his death of considerable wealth, she determined on setting up for a lady, believing that with fine clothes, a handsome house, a good table, and a companion, she should have no difficulty in performing the part, not only to her own satisfaction, but that of all her acquaintance. That wealth could not make a lady; and that rudeness to a companion was not a proof of being a gentlewoman, were truths which she had yet to learn. Fine clothes could do little towards making a naturally vulgar face and figure elegant;—procuring a companion to write her notes could not perfect herself in grammar, orthography, or pronunciation; but, unconscious of defect in these particulars, she expected that her society should be not only

prized, but courted; a point on which she was over anxious and touchy. Painful as were her vulgarity and ignorance to one accustomed to the refined and elegant mind of Mrs. Arnold, Katharine might have overlooked these deficiencies, and, with her grateful disposition, have become in time attached to her; but that unhappily the heart had also glaring and innumerable failings. She might not originally have had a bad temper, and a revengeful disposition; but puffed up by riches, and prompted by vanity, she now expected and desired all to bow down before her; yet, unable to forget the mean and penurious ways by which her wealth had been acquired, she would haggle for a sixpence with a tradesman, or a post-boy, though to gratify that vanity which destroyed her peace, she would spend pounds upon her dress and table; or any thing that might win admiration. To make a bargain, and to make a show were her ruling passions. Had she been contented

to associate with those in her own rank, her wealth might have enabled her to gratify the desires of her vanity, and she might have been a happy woman, in the lowest meaning of the word, if not a worthy one; but some demon whispered—"*Dixon be a lady.*"

She made the attempt; and from that moment she was miserable.

We will not detail the hourly vexations which Katharine endured from her combined meanness, and v nity. She could not be quite blind to her companion's superiority, and whilst she kept her to gratify her love of show, she also took every opportunity of annoying her, to gratify her love of rule. Act as Katharine would, her conduct was never as it should be. One day she was accused of putting herself too forward—the next of being too cold and proud to Mrs. Dixon's friends:—and the many rebuffs which that lady received in her attempts to force herself into society above her, were sure to be visited on Kate;

first, in feeling a community of shame in the rebuff; and next, in the endurance of the sneers of Mrs. Dixon, who having accidentally heard some of her history, and fished out more from the unsuspecting Mr. Carter, could thus give point to sarcasms which might otherwise have scarcely wounded. It was now that Katharine felt how surely an education and refinement above the natural station must prove a curse, and not a blessing; causing misery where it was intended to bring happiness—evil coming out of an injudicious good;—and this more particularly in the case of feeble woman, who cannot compel a higher destiny. Every day brought more painfully before her the contrast of the present, and the past:—the elegance at Beechen Cliff—the pretending vulgarity in Prospect Row;—the gentleness and affection of Mrs. Arnold—the petty jealousy and worrying malice of Mrs. Dixon.

A cloud came over her naturally sweet and

happy temper—her grateful heart was chilled —her spirit bowed beneath the hourly vexations to which it was exposed, and from which she saw no escape—for whither could she go? She knew too well the difficulty of procuring a situation; and she could not, and would not be a burden on kind Mrs. Carter.

Day by day was the young, gay spirit saddened more and more:—day by day faded the loveliness of youth; its happy gaiety, its freshness, and its hope. The eyes which had once danced in brightness were now dimmed by tears—the cheek which had glowed, or faded at a word, a thought, was now ever pale and thin;—the joyous laugh, the gush of happiness was hushed;—the light and playful sally heard no more. The natural eloquence of thought and feeling would have been thrown away or mocked; and to save herself as she best might from unpleasant remarks she rarely spoke, but when addressed; and then her words were cold and studied.

Had Mrs. Carter only guessed a thousandth part of her vexations she would have been in Prospect Row within many hours; and strange if she had returned alone: but she did not guess them, for Katharine kept those vexations to herself, not to pain the only being upon earth who loved her, always compelling herself to write in a cheerful strain.

To the wretched, the prospect of a change of scene gives the prospect of a change of fate, and Katharine heard with a rather lightened spirit that Mrs. Dixon intended making a little tour through some parts of Devonshire, and then passing over into Wales.

Alas! a change of scene does not always bring a change of feeling, or a lightening of sorrow, and Katharine was forced to admit after two or three days travelling that a continuance in Prospect Row, with all its vexations, would have been preferable, notwithstanding her admiration of the beautiful scenery presented to her observation.

Mrs. Dixon's jealousy and vanity, her passion for being treated as a person of consequence, and her passion for making a bargain were not left behind; but unhappily travelled with her. The post-boys and coachmen were always grumbling, and insolent—the Innkeepers always extortionate, and impertinent, at least so said Mrs. Dixon to Katharine.

"Mrs. Dixon is always harsh, mean, and grasping," said Katharine to herself, so that as may be supposed, her cheek regained no bloom, her eye no brightness; mind and form were fading—sorrow setting its mark on both.

Robertson says somewhere, I think in his history of South America, that the subdivision of trades marks the degree of civilization; now the 19th century boasts of its civilization, and hence a very minute subdivision of labour. Let each keep to his own peculiar branch of art. This is a novel, not an itinerary, so we will suppose the Devonshire tour nearly con-

cluded, and Mrs. Dixon and her companion gone to rest at the Golden Lion, at Barnstable, in a double bedded room with two doors; the one opening into a passage, the other, close to which stood Katharine's couch, (a poetical term, and therefore fitter for a heroine,) into a sitting room, as Kate was doomed to learn to her annoyance.

It was nearly one o'clock:—Mrs. Dixon was fast asleep, of which she had given proof for the last two hours; and poor Katharine, after a long weeping, had just fallen into a light slumber, so light that the faintest noise would break it. It was no faint noise by which it was to be broken.

No one but Mrs. Dixon could have slept through the loud ringing of bells, and the almost as loud clatter of tongues, which preceded the entrance of a large party into the room close to the side of Katharine's bed.

All the troops at Kalisch, and the innumerable crowned, and uncrowned personages

there assembled could scarcely have occasioned more riot, uproar, and confusion; yet there were some among the party who were any thing but rude or boisterous; and there was one voice that met her ear of which Katharine drank in every tone as though her life depended on not losing one. There was no question of honor or dishonor in listening, even had she not been too much agitated to argue the point; for she could not help overhearing every word, her door being so slight, and ill fitted; besides that one of those just arrived being deaf, the whole party had acquired the habit of speaking loud;—and who in their senses would tell secrets in an Inn, save in the faintest whisper?

The first few sentences referred to the adventures of the party on the road, including an overturn, and other delays which accounted for their late arrival; and Katharine was no further interested in the detail than to wish that their arrival had been delayed till the

morning, or that she could sleep through the hubbub like Mrs. Dixon, when a name and a question arrested and enforced her attention during the remainder of their stay.

"So this is the Golden Lion! I wonder among the innumerable discoveries making every day whether such an animal will be presented to the public? By the bye, Ermiston, was not that the Inn to which was bound the graceful dame, whose talent for bargaining you so much admired?"

"I know nothing about it," replied a voice at which Katharine's heart beat quick;—a voice that could never be forgotten, though it should not again address her in the tones of affection.

"Not know any thing about it? That is a good one, Ermiston! but I shall not believe you in spite of your short answer. Whilst I was laughing ready to kill myself at the bargaining and disputing of the elderly dame, don't pretent to tell me that you were not

watching that pale, slight girl, shrinking back in shame at her friend's vulgarity and meanness; and watching her with a more than common interest too, though you turned away the moment you believed yourself observed. I never saw you look thus before, and suspect she was an old acquaintance."

"Nonsense, Mr. Ward! my cousin is not at all likely to have seen the girl before, as my maid says she is the companion of that vulgar woman, who taunted her with having pauper parents," replied a female voice with the intonation of pettishness.

"It is not proved that all which your maid asserts is true; nor is it an absolute certainty that your treble refined cousin has never made any acquaintance in the female line beneath Lady Richmond, and her elegant sister Miss Clarendon," replied the first speaker, with an admirable mimicry of her ladyship's rather mincing manner, and its tinge of vexation. "A pretty girl is a pretty girl, whether in high,

or low life; and Earls have wedded pauper's daughters."

"You do not know Lord Ermiston; he would never think of marrying beneath him," replied the lady, who as Mr. Ward suspected, had set her heart on having the Earl for her brother-in-law.

"I am not so sure of that, Lady Richmond; his look was no common look, so you had better keep a good watch over your cousin, or, exquisitely fastidious as he is, you may have a pauper Countess cousin yet. I am thoroughly convinced they had met before. Is it not so Ermiston?" questioned Mr. Ward, who had set out in life with the resolve of amusing himself let who would be the sufferer. "You see he cannot say, no; and is afraid to say, yes," he continued after a pause, receiving no reply, and urged to proceed by the annoyance he occasioned. "Depend upon it they are old friends—perhaps lovers. I have it! this is the clever charity girl with

the crazy mother, who so nearly took him in, Darrell I think they call her, and would have been Countess of Ermiston, had not his stately mother saved him from her clutches. Confess, Ermiston."

Shocked—ashamed—still Katharine listened eagerly to catch the Earl's reply, involuntarily checking her breathing, lest she should lose a word. She thought she heard a muttered "Folly!" and a sudden rising; both half lost in Ward's light laugh; and then came another well known voice, its tones clear, full, and indignant.

"If you will have your jest, Ward, without regard to the feelings of others, choose some other subject than Miss Darrell; who is incapable of any act unfitting the most delicately minded woman. She never entertained the idea of taking in Lord Ermiston; and though unfortunate in her mother, the noblest in the land might be proud to obtain her as his bride."

"Hey day! Herbert Eustace turned Quixote!—*Preux chevalier!* Defender of Damsels! What eloquence of tongue! what flashing of dark eyes! You should be shamed, Ermiston. So you are, I see; not best pleased—envious of the honors which your cousin has achieved; playing old nurse to a wounded post-boy, and then entering at a critical moment to defend a slandered damsel. Pray did you know this peerless beggar girl? Yes, you did, now I recollect. Perhaps you were rivals which accounts for your gallant defence."

"Scarcely, methinks, in the eyes of the world; as, if rivals, Ermiston was the favored one."

"True; you were not rivals, or you would have boasted of not having been taken in, and been wrath at my supposition, instead of answering with such perfect indifference. Did you see that pale, elegant girl with the bargaining mistress, for such it seems she is?"

"You forget that I did not return from sketching till just as you left Bideford, so only heard your very amusing account of the bargainer."

"True again. Why you are getting all truth, since you lost your title; and are not half such an amusing person as of old."

"A plain Mr. cannot be expected to be as entertaining as a Baronet."

"True, a third time; but you bore the loss well. I should have shot my uncle, and cousin, and then fled the country; instead of which you gave up every thing with an over punctilious honor, and took to studying the law in earnest, to the wonder of all the wise-acres, who, after laughing at the idea, are compelled to admit that you are a rising young man; briefs pouring in on you daily, from your skilful defence of that poor, old fellow at Winchester; whose cause you were laughed at for undertaking without a fee."

"It was a good cause, and I was not sorry

to dedicate my powers, as it were, to honesty and humanity, pleading my first brief for nothing; time enough to grow selfish and politic —if I must so grow."

"Must so grow? to be sure! If all men were honest and liberal you gentlemen of the long robe would fare but ill I trow; the lives of the briefless would be brief indeed. I am for getting wealth and amusement, how you can, and when you can. 'Each for himself, and God for us all,' that is my maxim."

"Each for himself, may be succeeded by God for none; and, even in this world, the selfish rich man has not a hundreth part of the happiness of a generous poor one."

"I cry pecavi, if you mean to turn methodist preacher, Eustace. All of a piece with defending beggar men, and beggar girls. *Vive la Bagatelle*! is my motto, so I shall play up to that bargaining piece of vulgarity that I may exchange pretty nothings with her delicate looking companion,—companions and

governesses are hired to amuse, and be useful. What say you, Lord Richmond, am I not right."

"Very silly, and disagreeable indeed," replied his deaf Lordship with an earnest gravity which caused a general laugh.

"What is the matter? People always laugh at what I say."

"No wonder," thought his very affectionate wife—his bride not quite a year.

"The matter is this Lord Richmond; I am so much affronted at your calling me silly, and disagreeable, that I shall take my departure. Exit the elegant Ward!" making an attempt as he spoke to open the door close to Katharine's head.

"Who offers the reward?" asked his Lordship. "You all speak so low that there is no hearing a word you say. I am not deaf that you need halloo; but it is a very bad habit you have all got into talking so low."

"Talking so low!" thought Katharine. "I wish they had."

"I am sure Mr. Ward has been shouting like a town crier; but you get deafer and deafer, wanting to hear every thing, yet understanding nothing," replied his young wife contemptuously.

How few the months since she had modulated her tones to suit his infirmity! She was a portionless girl then—she was a rich wife now.

"It must be fastened on the other side," exclaimed Mr. Ward, still racketting at the door, to poor Katharine's utter horror, who expected him every moment to burst headlong into her apartment, so fragile was the door—so frail the fastenings.

Should this happen, and the pale, sickly companion be identified with the beggar girl, who had nearly taken in Lord Ermiston, how should she survive the shame? Yet she had

no means of averting the peril—she could not beg him to desist—she scarcely even dared to move, so narrow was the space between the door and bed;—she could but lie in silent terror—breathless—motionless—faint with the excess of fear.

"Pray do not make such a noise, Ward; you distract Lady Richmond; and they will take you for some vulgar traveller," observed Lord Ermiston with a sharpness unusual to him, probably not sorry of a legitimate cause for rebuke.

"I am determined to see where this door leads to," answered Ward pettishly, employing a force which promised to accomplish his wishes.

Katharine gave up all for lost.

"You shall do no such thing, whilst you form one of our party," said Herbert Eustace decidedly, laying a strong grasp upon his arm. "We have no right to disturb the rest of others because by choice, or accident we travel late

ourselves. You have already been far more noisy than is creditable," he added, confirmed in his former suspicion that Mr. Ward was not quite as sober as he should be.

"What do you please to want, sir?" demanded two almost breathless waiters rushing in at opposite doors.

"Why to go to bed, to be sure."

"This way, if you please, sir: you can't go there. This is the way to your room, and missis hopes that you will go quietly, for the whole house is up;" and the loud ringing of bells confirmed his assertion.

"If people will go to bed so early, they deserve to be disturbed," said Ward, as he followed the waiter.

Not once again during that long, long night did Katharine close her eyes. When her fear of a forcible entry had passed away the memory of the conversation still remained, paining—torturing. She had heard a voice she never thought to hear again:—

but how had she heard it? Not speaking in detence of her. No! No! though she had listened as if her life were on his words. He had heard her jested on—accused of art—and yet had said no word in her defence; admitting, by his silence, the justice of the charge. Could she have acted thus? Could he have ever loved?

But one had spoken—spoken warmly in her favor;—the one whom she had rejected for him who was silent. Was she grateful? Did she thank him in her heart, as he deserved? No: she was unjust to Herbert Eustace—she was ungrateful. She felt something like anger towards him. He had spoken so quickly—he was always forward;—had he waited but one moment longer he whom she had loved might have defended her. And how delightful to be defended by that one to whom the heart still clings. He had interfered when he was not required;—he had stepped in impertinently, taking another's place. She

hoped never to meet him;—his presence would bring back the shame and grief of that night to her mind.

Katharine Darrell was no angel—she was but a woman; a weak, and loving woman:—she could not bear that he to whom she had been attached should be outdone in generous and honorable feeling by another:—she disliked that other for his very superiority, which she could not but feel, yet would not admit.

Oh the shame, and the sorrow of that weary night!

How thankful was she that Mrs. Dixon had slept through all the noise, a marvellous occurrence certainly, and how much more thankful was she that their departure for Ilfracomb at a very early hour marred Mr. Ward's intention of making acquaintance with the vulgar bargainer, the better to amuse himself with the companion, hired to be useful. Even the beauties of Ilfracomb were scarcely ad-

mired, so eager was she to embark for Swansea and thus avoid an encounter with Lady Richmond's party, who had proposed proceeding thither after a visit to Linton, and Lymouth.

She had taken her seat on board—Mrs. Dixon, after haggling with the grumbling porter had paid twopence less than he demanded—the packet had passed out of the harbour, and then Katharine looking back with a sigh grieved at the impossibility of a meeting which she had a few moments since so dreaded.

Could she have looked upon him!—seen him, though only for one instant, and without his knowledge! She would have run the risk of enduring the impertinence of Mr. Ward only for one moment's sight of Lord Ermiston.

Their paths might never cross again. She might not live long—if she could but have looked upon him once before she died! And why should she look upon him? She was—

she could be nothing more to him. His mother had said leave her—and he had left her! A stranger blamed—and he was silent! It mattered not:—still she longed to look upon his face once more.

The weakness of humanity was hers. She pined for that when beyond her reach, which she had dreaded when likely to be presented to her. Regret was vain;—Swansea was reached; and no Ermiston had met her view.

CHAPTER V.

It is a hard matter for friends to meet; but mountains may be removed with earthquakes, and so encounter.

As you like it.

Poor lady, she were better love a dream.

Twelfth Night.

Mrs. Dixon had a strange idea that to see sights was a proof of fashion, so after having quarrelled with the waiter, and the charges at one hotel, and removed to another, she set off with Kate to see the copper works on the other side of the water, openly expressing her disgust at being obliged to consort for the

brief two minutes row in the Ferry boat, with market men, and market women—a Welsh farmer, and a Welsh pony; two riotous dogs; and three more riotous, dirty boys.

Katharine with difficulty checked a smile at her declamation against the vulgarity of her fellow passengers, thinking how often the angry declaimer was herself subject to the same censure; and the smile could no longer be repressed when Mrs. Dixon, rather than accept the proffered aid of a somewhat dirty hand to assist her over the wet, slippery plank, and the as wet slippery shingles, for the tide was low, missed her footing, and came down on one knee, thereby, to her great discomfiture, soiling a favorite silk dress, and subjecting herself to the laugh of those whom she had so openly abused. The same rough, dirty hand was extended to Katharine with a sly smile at Mrs. Dixon, and a friendly admonition to take it. Kate accepted it, as frankly as it was offered, and was safely handed to the

top of the slippery, shingle bank by the gallant Welshman, proud of being allowed the honor, and absolutely grateful for her gentle thanks.

"Well she is a sweet creature, surely! but she ain't long for this world," was the honest Welshman's thought.

To save the expense of a fly, Mrs. Dixon had chosen the nearest copper works wherewith to satisfy her curiosity, and prove her fashion; and the agent, who happened to be on the spot came forward politely on learning her wishes, to do the honors of the copper lions, pointing out every thing worthy of notice as they passed along.

The copper ore had been looked at as it came out of the vessel—the door of one of the enormous ovens in which it is cleansed from arsenic and other particles had been opened, Katharine thinking as she looked in and saw the flame curling round the vaulted roof of the oven of the nursery tale into which

the giant is thrust by the captive sisters; and the whole party were standing in the great smelting division with its numerous coppers full of boiling metal. It was a large, square space with a raftered roof partly resting on rough wooden pillars. The various implements employed were scattered round in picturesque disorder; and, being near the time of the midday meal, the men were dispersed into groups, some conversing, some receiving their dinner from the hands of wives or children clad in the primitive Welsh dress, the striped jacket and petticoat, with the black beaver hat over the broad frilled cap; and some were already seated at their humble repast at the further end of the building, or in one adjoining seen through an opening. That building would have been dark but for the fiery glow, and rich, red light shed around by the furnace fires, and the melted ore.

Disliking the heat, which was intense, Mrs. Dixon drew back, but Katharine still stood

before an immense copper in which boiled and bubbled the smelting metal, gazing admiringly on the mass of liquid fire, the colour of vivid flame; save where dulled or darkened by the scum, or catching tints of blue, or green, or purple from accidental causes. One of the men advanced, and Katharine watched him as he stood before her reeking with the heat clear off the scum of varied colouring with a long handled iron scraper: and then open a passage from the boiler. Out poured the boiling ore, rich, glowing like a stream of lava, dimpling, bubbling, as it passed along, a gush of liquid fire, mimicing the dimpling, and the bubbling of some summer rivulet.

"How beautiful!" exclaimed the delighted Katharine raising her hands with something of the childlike rapture of her happier days, to the great amusement of the agent, to whom such admiration was a novelty.

For some moments longer she continued to gaze admiringly on the stream of fire, still

flowing on into a large reservoir, gradually deepening in colour, and becoming less liquid, as more cool, and then she turned to look on the effects of the vivid light on the objects round, throwing out some in glowing relief, casting others, from intervening projections, into deep shadow. Struck like the agent by her delighted admiration, some of the workmen had drawn towards her, conversing in the Welsh language, and as she gazed on the nearest group with the red light glaring full on their faces, she started, and turned pale, for there stood her father—her dreaded father, with his keen eye fixed upon her. For an instant she turned away—when she looked again that dreaded face was no longer there; but a man, she fancied in obedience to some order of the agent given in Welsh, was leaving the building through an opposite doorway.

"Who is that?" she questioned quickly with some faint hope that she might have been mistaken.

"David ap Reece: one of our best workmen who has been with us these ten years," replied the agent, not without surprise at her abrupt question.

Then she had been mistaken. And yet that eye!—it had a power over her which no other eye possessed. She wished to believe that she had been deceived—that her alarm was vain; and to a certain extent, she succeeded in persuading herself of what she desired; yet she did not breathe freely, (strange if she had in the atmosphere of a smelting house,) till she found herself winding round the foot of Kilvey Hill on her homeward way. The later lions of the copper works had been scarcely noticed—her thoughts had been on other things; and she had gazed anxiously on each fresh group—round each fresh building, fearing to meet again that startling look.

Mrs. Dixon felt too little interest in her health or feelings to remark the increased paleness of her cheek; or if she observed at all

attributed it to the heat and suffocating atmosphere. No wonder that the grass, and flowers droop and die beneath that blighting, smothering vapour; and yet the people near live to a good old age.

The day passed without a fresh fright, and Katharine decided that she must have been deceived. The agent had been right;—it was the unfeared David ap Reece, not the dreaded James Darrell. Thinking only of one person, herself, she never considered the vagueness of her question—"who is that?" when there were many present.

Mrs. Dixon found a letter at Swansea which decided her on proceeding by the steamer on the following Monday, to Stapleton, a village in the neighbourhood of Bristol, where a friend had taken her lodgings, and Katharine, though resolved to believe that she had been mistaken was not sorry for their speedy departure.

The next day after showing her smart bonnet and pelisse, both more gay than ele-

gant, at St. Mary's Church, Mrs. Dixon called on Katharine to accompany her in a walk, determined that all the inhabitants of the town should have an opportunity of admiring the said bonnet and pelisse. After pacing up and down the Boroughs, and the pier, (the sands from a high tide, being unpaceable,) Mrs. Dixon turned up Wind Street with the laudable intention of equally enlightening the other end of the town as to the fashions.

"I wonder what all that uproar at the back of this street is about! I should like to know:" remarked Mrs. Dixon, whose curiosity equalled her vanity, stopping to listen to a confused murmur of many voices.

"Only some of the common people quarrelling, I dare say," answered Katharine having a horror of a crowd, particularly with only Mrs. Dixon for a chaperon, and aware from experience what reply was most likely to check her curiosity.

for them—they have no res
betters," and on went Mr
on the insolence of the rabb
broad Wind Street, and hal
Castle Street, uninterrupte
who rarely spoke but when

Here the oration was bro
conclusion.

"Bless me! there is a la
and here is another—I dec
fast. Where is the umbrella

"You said it would not
therefore I did not bring it."

"That is always the way
never do nothing right. O
you never to go out without

Being Sunday, of course every shop was closed, but a few paces forward was a low arched way to the right, and up this dashed Mrs. Dixon, followed by her companion, who thought, between sighing and smiling, how true it was that she never did nothing right.

"I wonder where this passage leads to," said Mrs. Dixon, after having carefully wiped off the drops of rain from her pet pelisse. "Do go and see Miss Darrell; and make yourself useful, for once; it cannot hurt your dress."

A few steps showed the obedient Katharine the outlet to the passage. It opened into a small square court, shut in by buildings, with a flight of stone steps leading up to a poorish looking house on one side, and a closed door on each of the other three. One of these she could see through the chinks in the boards led into a garden, the other two apparently into some strong building not in the best re-

pair; and looking up she saw that the arched way under which they had sheltered was one of the entrances to the old castle, whose remains, with its long line of cloisters, she had so much admired from the other side of the water, as giving a character to the otherwise commonplace town.

"It must be a strange place! I'll just take a peep as it does not rain now," observed the curious Mrs. Dixon, on hearing her report, walking up the passage and into the court as she spoke. "I wonder whose garden this is,—can't you ask some one, Miss Darrell? you never learn anything."

"There is no one here to ask, ma'am."

"No one here indeed! Look at those children! You will say anything rather than give yourself trouble."

Katharine coloured slightly at the rebuke, which was perfectly underserved, for there had been no one in sight till that very instant, when some boys and girls came running into

the court, some rushing up the steps to the door of the house, at which those from within now appeared; some standing to stare at Mrs. Dixon, and her companion, others chasing to and fro between them and the passage as if in momentary expectation of a strange arrival.

"Whose garden is this?" asked Katharine of one of the little starers.

The child only stared the more, and then turned to the passage up which came several women, and one or two men, all looking back with the same appearance of expectation, yet all finding opportunity to stare at the ladies, who were evidently objects of surprise and curiosity, whether in themselves, or from their situation Katharine could not decide; whilst Mrs. Dixon attributed all the staring to admiration of her dress.

"What is the matter?" asked Katharine of one of the women.

"A shake of the head with a hurried "Dim Sassenach," was the only reply.

A treading of many feet, and a confused mingling of voices, some loud in wrath, which had been gradually nearing, now appeared to stop at the entrance of the arched way towards which all eyes were directed. Thither also looked Katharine, and to her horror and dismay saw a great crowd assembled, some already streaming up the narrow passage into the small court, capable of containing very few; and others behind struggling for admission by force of tongue and arm.

"Lock the door!" cried one of the foremost.

The door was locked with difficulty on those without; and then the narrow passage poured into the court its medley crowd; some actors in the tumult, some but spectators.

"What is the matter?" asked Katharine again of a decent looking woman beside her.

"Oh, ma'am, a wicked wretch! Killed a poor girl down by the wharf there—knocked

her down with a rolling pin. Well, surely, how he swears! and how he be a struggling!"

Katharine could not see his struggles on account of the crowd before her; but she could plainly distinguish language most unfit for female ear, or christian tongue.

"What are they doing here?" she asked again.

"Why don't you know? this is the lock up house, where they be a going to put him in," answered the woman in evident surprise.

"Good Heavens! What shall we do?" exclaimed poor Kate: shocked and alarmed at the intelligence, and gazing with shame and terror on the crowd, who divided their attention between the struggling prisoner and the strange ladies.

"Why did not you know it then, and come on purpose to see un put in?" asked the woman, supposing all moved by the same tastes as herself.

"Not for the world! We are strangers, and only sheltered from the rain. Can we not get out?" asked Katharine looking as if ready to dash through the crowd in her terror at the coarse language of the prisoner, and the staring of the wondering spectators.

"No; you can't get out, for the door is locked. But don't ye be frightened—they won't do no harm to you; and I'll take care of ye," replied the woman, placing her hand kindly on her arm.

"What is the matter?" asked Mrs. Dixon impatiently, forcing her way up to Katharine who was a little in advance.

The pale and trembling girl explained as briefly as she could.

"This is just like you, Miss Darrell. Getting me in here by talking of the strange things to be seen. A pretty place for me to be in among such a rabble," clutching away her dress from the pawing of a curious child. "What does the man struggle for when he

can't get away, foolish fellow? What sort of a man is it?" she continued trying to push through the crowd for a nearer view, being too short otherwise to catch a glimpse of the prisoner.

"Oh! do let us get back out of the crowd into this corner!" pleaded Katharine, sensitively alive to the awkwardness of her situation, holding her arm to stay her advance.

"Nonsense! if you will get me into a crowd you must take the consequences. I don't see why I should skulk into a corner as if I was ashamed," replied Mrs. Dixon, pushing on as she spoke, her curiosity overcoming her dread of contact with the vulgar.

"Poor thing! I'll take care of ye, and put ye in a safe place," said the woman, who had begged Katharine not to be frightened, half carrying, half dragging her as she spoke up three steps, under the archway of a door, and out of the pressure of the crowd, above whom she was by this means slightly elevated.

"There now you be quite safe, and can see all, so you need not shiver and look so white. See! See!" pointing to the prisoner. "How he do strive—a wicked wretch! he must be in liquor, surely; and how he be abusing them gentlemen, that helped take un! They will never get him in at the door. Look! Look! how he swings his arm all round, right on the constable."

However horrible the sight that is acting before you, it is scarcely possible to hear one eager with the excitement of the scene urging you to gaze, and not involuntarily comply. At that eager bidding Katharine turned towards the prisoner;—by some chance, their eyes met—it was her father!

His struggles ceased—his oaths were hushed;—his course was resolved on in an instant.

"Only let me speak to my daughter, and I will submit at once," he said, addressing the constables, who were forcing him into the blind house.

"Where is your daughter?"

"There!" pointing to the pallid, trembling Katharine. "Come closer, Kate, and speak to me."

Kate did not—could not stir. To know herself the child of such a wretch!—to be thus claimed by him at such a moment, and in such a crowd!—to feel that every eye was fixed upon her in scorn, in pity, or in wonder, deprived her of the power of speech or motion. All she did was to continue gazing at her father, as if constrained by the compelling of some magic power.

"It is a lie."

"It is only to gain time."

"That pretty, delicate creature cannot be his child," said several.

"It is no lie—that is Kate Darrell, my daughter—let her deny it if she can;—those gentlemen will tell you that I speak the truth. Lord Ermiston knows her well; she was to have been his wife."

Ermiston! Katharine started at the name, involuntarily looking where the prisoner looked; and there a few paces off stood the Earl himself, flushed and angry at the appeal which had turned the eyes of the curious upon him, connecting him in the minds of the crowd, as he thought with a feeling little short of horror, with the low, wicked wretch before him. Was he to be pointed out as that felon's intended son-in-law? Instead of answering the man's assertion boldly, and frankly—instead of pitying and protecting Katharine, whose distress he saw in a hurried glance, and whose situation must be a thousand times more painful than his own, he turned haughtily away, declaring that he had never seen the man before, and knew nothing of him.

"But you shall see me again, and know more of me: ay, and repent of this, and wish that you had married her—but it shall be too late!" replied the prisoner fiercely.

Katharine met Lord Ermiston's hurried

glance;—she saw him turn away in horror, and disgust, without one pitying thought for her; and his name which had involuntarily risen to her lips, forgetting at the moment all but her former trust in his affection, died away in a wordless murmur, as she covered her face with her hands to hide her shame. She was aware that another gentleman, and not a stranger, was standing by his side, but she had not marked his look of compassion—she had not counted on his protection—she had thought of Ermiston, and Ermiston alone.

"Kate, own that I am your father," exclaimed the prisoner authoritatively.

"Do not be alarmed!—I will protect you, let what will happen," said a voice close beside her; a voice which, save on one occasion, had never addressed her but in kindness—it was the voice of Herbert Eustace.

Kind as was the tone, she feared to withdraw her hands, and gaze upon the speaker, lest his looks should belie his words—lest

" Speak, Kate ; I comman
her father.

" Is this true? Has he
mand? If not, defy him.
you must feel and will pr
Herbert Eustace in a low, kin

" Alas it is too true !" repli
a tone scarcely louder than a
so desponding, that the col
pitied her.

" Do you wish to speak t
he asked, hesitating slightly
nounced the word.

He marked her shudder bef
faint and hasty, " No !"

" Then I had better take

passionate pleading, and venturing for the first time to look up into his face.

"I will protect you with my life. Rely on me," was his prompt reply to that wild, and touching entreaty.

And she did rely on him, without a doubt—without a question, as to what course he would pursue, clinging to his arm as he supported her through the crowd, who touched with pity for the half fainting girl, made way to let her pass.

"Is that low wretch really your father?" asked Mrs Dixon with the utmost contempt, as Herbert and his charge approached her in their passage out.

"This is no time to distress Miss Darrell by questions," replied her supporter sternly, feeling the shudder of the gentle creature clinging to him.

"Stop, Kate Darrell! I am not going to be left in the lurch here, while you play fine lady."

"Tell him I will give him money—all I have. Oh! God forgive me that I cannot love him," exclaimed poor Kate, trembling in every limb.

"Miss Darrell is too ill, and too much frightened by your violence to speak with you now; and the course you are pursuing can only prove injurious to yourself. Submit for the present;—I am not inclined to be harsh; and when I have placed this lady in safety will return and do what I can for you, in justice, for her sake."

The man looked doubtful for an instant, then said, "Do you promise, on your honor, Mr. Eustace, to return immediately, and not deal harshly by me—but treat me as her father?"

"I do."

"Then I am satisfied. You are a man to be relied on—not a coward afraid of being laughed at," he added glancing with contempt

at Ermiston, who though standing apart was still within hearing.

"Will you unlock the door, and let this lady out? she is fainting," said Herbert to one of the constables.

"Yes, yes: I'll let her out, poor thing," replied the pitying officer, her *cavalier servente* of the ferry boat the day before, but so smartened in appearance that she might well be excused for not recognising him.

"You had better follow close behind us," said Herbert to Mrs. Dixon.

It was impossible to reach the street without approaching Lord Ermiston. Ill as she was—only half conscious of what was passing round her—Katharine knew this—felt this. The head was bowed still lower as she passed before him; and the sigh that she could not suppress as he allowed her to proceed without one soothing word, only stepping back as she came near; and her increasing faintness told her supporter that she still loved, and had still

hoped, not perhaps for a return of affection, but for some show of pity.

Poor Katharine's trials were not over. The crowd which had pressed so eagerly forward to gain admission into the court still lingered round the door which barred their entrance; and when Herbert and his fainting charge appeared, followed by Mrs. Dixon, they had to endure the staring, the wonderment, and the remarks of those assembled.

"Can't you stand back and be quiet? Did you never see a lady fainting before?" cried the constable authoritatively.

"Had I not better procure a fly for Miss Darrell?" asked Herbert of Mrs. Dixon.

"Just as you, and Miss Darrell please. If she chooses to get into such scrapes she must get out of them as she can;—she should not expect me to pay for a fly."

"You shall not be asked to do so," he replied with a look, which caused the lady to walk away, leaving her now reviving com-

panion to his protection. The friendly constable stopped a passing fly, and Herbert handed in his charge with a kind brother's care.

"Are you well enough to go home alone?"

"Yes, thank you, I am much better now. —Did you say you would return to him? Will you indeed show me more kindness?"

"Any, every kindness, for her sake who is no more; and for your own. What would you have done?"

"I know not!" she replied clasping her hands. "They say he has killed some one—yet he is my father still. Oh that I had died with her! I can do good to none;—all is shame, and sorrow;—there is no peace for me but in the grave."

"Hush! Hush, my dear Miss Darrell! you must not talk thus. There are, I trust, long years of peace before you yet; you can do good to many, by the patient bearing of your

trials; and will yet be regarded and respected as you deserve. Your fears outrun the danger. The man only struck a girl, and then me, for interfering. Of course, I shall not appear against him; and I have no doubt I can so arrange with the poor girl as to stay further proceedings."

"And will you do this? Will you save him—save me from public shame—the public gaze?"

"I will—only be calm," he said, for her wild manner shocked him.

"Do this, and I will be calm—quite calm. Take my purse—tell him I will send him more. He is my father, though I cannot love him. But I need not see him?—surely I need not see him?"

"Certainly not: I will make it a condition," he replied, observing how much she feared him. "Leave all to me—I will act in all things as you would wish."

Then telling her that she should thank him another time, he gave the requisite orders to the driver and returned to the prisoner.

"What does all this mean, Miss Darrell?" demanded Mrs. Dixon, flouncing into her room. "Who was the gentleman, who handed you into the fly?

"Mr. Herbert Eustace—nephew to Sir John Eustace," Katharine added, willing to propitiate Mrs. Dixon in his favor, lest she should throw some obstacle in the way of their meeting, should he come, as he had promised, to report the success of his endeavours.

"Indeed! And that other gentleman?"

"Lord Ermiston."

"And were you really ever going to be married to him?"

"Yes," faltered Katharine.

"La! how strange! Do tell me all about it," drawing close to her companion, forgetting her anger in her curiosity.

Her prying questions were a fresh trial, but Katharine so answered them, that Mrs. Dixon was tolerably satisfied with the explanation, though it revealed little more than she already knew; and the weeping girl had the pleasure of finding that, instead of throwing any obstacle in the way of a meeting with Mr. Eustace, she highly approved of his coming, on hearing that he was the nephew of a Baronet, the cousin of an Earl: nay, she even had the delicacy not to enter the room till some time after his arrival, and then made a sort of apology for her former conduct, asking him to tea as an *amende*, an invitation which, to Katharine's delight, he politely declined.

The report he brought was all she could desire—more than she had dared to hope.

By dint of talking to all the parties concerned, giving money to the injured girl, and dropping all complaint on the part of himself, and Lord Ermiston, he had, with the assistance of an influential person, procured the

release of the culprit, on condition of his leaving the neighbourhood immediately, a condition on the fulfilment of which Herbert insisted for the sake of Katharine, and to which Darrell himself made no objection, the same reason which had induced him to avoid his daughter at the copper works, controlling him now that the necessity for claiming her assistance no longer existed. He had even the grace to send her his thanks, adding that he had no wish to harm or terrify her, as he might one day show.

"I can pay you the gold by which you have quieted my fears," said Katharine placing the sum in his hand (an advance from Mrs. Dixon, and which he took with hesitation) "but how shall I ever repay your kindness?"

"By claiming my services at any time when they may be required—by looking on me as an elder brother, the character assigned to me in other days, you know," he added

kindly, but with no embarrassment to show that he had once played the lover.

Katharine sighed as she thought of former times; but before she could reply Mrs. Dixon entered the apartment, and Herbert soon after took his leave with a polite hope that they would have a pleasant voyage on the morrow; and some kind words to Katharine, but without the slightest reference to any future meeting.

Were his offers of service but empty words then? Or did he only mean that she might call upon him if they chanced to meet? He had asked nothing of her future plans—whence she had come—whither she was going. He had expressed no surprise, no sorrow at finding her in her present situation. Was this indifference, or delicacy? He had but once alluded to the past, and then she thought unwillingly, perhaps under the idea that such allusions would be painful—or perhaps he would have entered on her situation and her

plans, had not Mrs. Dixon entered when she had—and yet she scarcely thought so. Then when relating what he had done to procure Darrell's release, of which she had insisted on hearing the details, he had named Lord Ermiston but once, and that incidentally, as not pressing the charge against her father, (for he too had been struck,) yet he must have known, that is she thought he might have guessed, how she pined to hear that the Earl had joined in serving her.

Was this silence too from delicacy? Did he mark how she trembled, only at the name, and did he despise her for this weakness? Or was he unwilling from his former enmity to his cousin to speak in his praise? Or had Lord Ermiston really taken no part in his kind endeavours—pitying her when absent as little as when present? And what should it matter to her what he had done—or what he had not done?

He had renounced the love for which he

had so humbly sued;—he had himself pronounced the words that parted them:—twice had he turned from her in disgust,—once, when claimed by her mother—now, when claimed by her father:—twice had he left her unprotected, not heeding her distress, to save himself from ridicule. And could she love him still? Shame on her woman's heart! She hid her face, for she felt the blood rush up into her pale cheeks, as she asked herself the question. It was the first time she had met Lord Ermiston, and Mr. Eustace since the breaking off her engagement with the former—since the death of Mrs. Arnold—and under what circumstances had they met?

Then she was surrounded with every delicacy wealth could bring—guarded by every care, love could imagine;—flattered—courted—the reputed heiress of thousands. Now she was a poor dependant—slaving for a bare subsistence—scoffed at and despised;—courted—flattered—loved by none;—a beggar—not

an heiress! And how had she been met by the friends of former days? The accepted lover had turned from her in disgust;—the rejected lover had acted in all kindness; but yet even they had not met as in former days. The warmth, the frankness, the gaiety of their early acquaintance was no more. He was attentive, very attentive, almost formally so; but there was restraint, instead of frankness; he had shown no pleasure at their meeting—expressed no wish that they should ever meet again. Was this manner to show her that though willing to serve, he had ceased to love her, and had long since abandoned the desire to call her his? Was this manner to bid her mark the difference of her present station in society—to check her presumption? And could he really think that she required this checking, and this warning? Was her humiliation never to be complete?—her trials never to be ended?

She ought to be very grateful to Mr.

Eustace—she was very grateful;—but she could not quite conceal from herself that she was not as grateful as she ought to be;—that whilst she judged kindly of one cousin, she judged critically of the other; half inclined to quarrel with that ready kindness, which made the weakness and selfishness of Ermiston the more apparent from the contrast.

Poor Katharine was but a woman!

CHAPTER VI.

I trace upon her altered brow
The ashes of a thousand dreams.
N. P. Willis.

"Two shillings indeed! for bringing three small trunks just a few steps from the hotel. It is a down right cheat—I shall give no such thing. Here is a shilling for you, that is quite enough," exclaimed Mrs. Dixon, one foot upon the steamer, and one upon the quay, haggling with a common man whom she had picked up, as she termed it, thinking that he

would take her boxes cheaper than the regular porter of the hotel.

"Three small trunks! Well, surely if they be small, I knows nothing. And all the way from the Cambry too. 'Tain't a hap'orth too much."

"It is a down right extortion and I won't submit to it," rejoined Mrs. Dixon.

"You are perfectly right not to think of it, ma'am: I wish all were as public spirited," said a young man in whose eyes revelled the love of mischief, crossing from the opposite side of the steamer.

Kate looked up at the voice: and then to that part from whence he had come. The voice was the voice of Mr. Ward—the party whose side he had deserted consisted of two stylish looking females, a more than middle aged gentleman, and Lord Ermiston. His Lordship's head was at that moment turned away;—she did not look again.

"If you intend going in the packet ma'am,

I must beg you will come on board directly; I have already waited to the last minute, and am a afraid we shall ground as it is," said the Captain bluntly.

"But I can't come without my trunks, and I won't be cheated," replied Mrs. Dixon sharply.

"Capital! you are quite right, ma'am," cried the mischief loving Ward.

"Cheated! I am no more a cheat nor yourself—nor so much, wanting to rob a poor feller of his bread; two shillings ain't too much."

"I say it is too much. I'll only give eighteen-pence; and that is sixpence more than you ought to have," replied Mrs. Dixon, with increasing warmth.

"Then you shan't have the trunks, I'll keep 'em till you pays."

"Then I'll prosecute you for a thief, as you are," cried Mrs. Dixon.

"That is right," exclaimed Mr. Ward.

"Mean—stingy,—it is a great shame!" cried several voices from the crowd, who had been attracted by the altercation, and to whom the man was relating the whole transaction with violent gestures, and a mixture of Welsh and English utterly incomprehensible to those ot accustomed to the mingling.

"I can't wait another minute," exclaimed the Captain, handing in Katharine, who ashamed and alarmed, at the dispute, and overcome at the thought of spending a whole day in the same vessel with Lord Ermiston, submitted to his guidance quite unconscious of what she was doing. "Come, ma'am! We can't wait any longer: you must come at once," offering to assist Mrs. Dixon into the packet.

"But I can't go without my trunks. Tell the man to put them on board."

"Come, my man! Don't keep the packet waiting—put the lady's trunks on board."

"Lady indeed! call her lady!" vociferated many in contempt.

"Pay, and I'll leave the trunks—if not, I'll take 'em back."

"Make him leave them!" almost shouted Mrs. Dixon, flushed with rage, appealing to Mr. Ward, and the Captain. The first only mischievously encouraged her to be firm, applauding her spirit, whilst the last muttered;—"I have nothing to do with this. Throw off there! and put on the steam."

"For heaven sake, pay him! every one is looking at us," pleaded poor Katharine, ready to sink with shame and vexation.

"I shan't indeed, replied Mrs. Dixon flinging off the hand she had placed on her arm with rudeness; "you may have more money than you know what to do with out of what I pay you, but I am not so rich."

"Captain, put me on shore again," she said having been obliged to enter the packet to

avoid falling into the water, as it parted from the quay. "Put me on shore I'll prosecute that man if it costs me a thousand pounds. Here is the money," throwing him eighteen pence; "and now if he keeps the trunks I'll trounce him."

"I'll give you two of the trunks Missis, and keep the other till you pays all," exclaimed the man, amid the laughter and cheers of his companions, swinging two of the trunks on board as he spoke, but retaining one, and unluckily poor Kate's.

"That is Miss Darrell's concern, not mine;" remarked Mrs. Dixon triumphantly. "You may manage that as you please; but you deserve to lose it, you will have such a heavy trunk. You had better try what bargain you can make, he may ask less from you," she added turning away to a seat.

"What does he ask? Give him any

thing!" said Katharine roused to action by the fear of losing her trunk, and holding out her purse to the Captain.

"Holla to him, and say you will pay a little extra; and I dare say he will bring it off in a boat," answered the Captain quickly, confounding the trembling girl with Mrs. Dixon, whose meanness had disgusted him.

Holla! poor Katharine holla, when the vessel had floated into the middle of the stream, and the crowd were laughing at her vexation, and cheering the man who shouldering her trunk was preparing to depart! And all this to have occurred in Lord Ermiston's presence! They seemed ever doomed to meet under circumstance of shame to her.

"Permit me to assist the fairest of the fair," said Mr. Ward, advancing with an impertinent manner to where she still stood, at the side of the packet watching the receding trunk.

"I will settle it for you," said the kindly

voice of Herbert Eustace, who having been arranging some luggage till within the last few moments, had only just learnt the cause of contention.

A few words to the Captain, to whom he was known, and all was settled. A boat took in the trunk at the end of the pier, Kate of course, readily paying the demand through Mr. Eustace, whilst the Captain made a blunt apology for not having sooner proposed this plan, pleading in excuse for not waiting, that the tide was running fast out of the harbour. The tide was running fast and the vessel grated on the shingles, as she passed out—five minutes more and she could not have sailed for the next twelve hours.

"I am so much obliged to you," said Katharine as Herbert returned to her side, gladly turning away from Mr. Ward, whose flatteries were displeasing.

"I am sorry my ignorance of your distress precluded my interfering sooner; but it was a

sudden fancy our crossing to-day, and I was busy seeing to the safe packing of the carriage. You have been alarmed, and tremble still; let me recommend an hour's rest in the cabin," he said, drawing her arm kindly within his as he spoke, for he saw that she needed support; and perhaps, he thought, might not be sorry to be farther removed from Lord Ermiston, who had looked steadily at Kilvey Hill during the whole of the contention, not once offering to assist her.

Never was advice more acceptable; but Mrs. Dixon's voice recalled the recollection that she was no longer her own mistress;—she was hired to be useful and amusing. Herbert guessed the cause of her sudden hesitation.

"I will amuse Mrs. Dixon, and you cannot be rude enough to doubt my powers of entertaining, though in losing my title I am aware I lost half my perfections. Good morning, Mrs. Dixon: I want you to second

me in persuading Miss Darrell to lie down a little; she has a twelve hours voyage before her, and does, not look very strong; but she seems disinclined to leave you, though I have promised to do my best to be entertaining; and I really can be very agreeable when I try."

"No one can doubt that," said the lady graciously. "You had better go down, Miss Darrell; and I hope when you come on deck again you will look less like a ghost."

Katharine did not come on deck again for some hours, not indeed till Mrs. Dixon herself went to call her, telling her at the same time though, that she had not missed her in the least, Mr. Eustace had made himself so pleasant, lending her a book when obliged to join his party; whilst the other young man said she was perfectly right about the trunk. The people he was with seemed very grand and proud; and would not speak to any of the passengers.

"I thought Lord Ermiston might have asked after you, Miss Darrell, considering that you had once being going to be married, but he would not say a word, though I went and stood by him; said you were poorly; and asked when we should land at Bristol. He drew back as if I had been a blackamoor, quite unlike his cousin Mr. Eustace, who is a real gentleman, and that other young man, Ward, I think they call him, who seems very sensible and pleasant. Well, much good may it do people to be so proud."

"Here comes the companion on deck again! then I shall go and have some fun," said Mr. Ward, who was sitting by Lady Richmond. "That is if you do not forbid the flirtation, Ermiston, for I understand she is the very identical Katharine Darrell to whom you enacted the lover at Sallowfield, and I hear there was a capital scene at the old castle yesterday. Only fancy, Lady Richmond, Eustace and Ermiston playing the

Quixotes, and helping to put a man in the blind house for knocking down a poor girl, who called him a thief, or some such thing, escorted all the time by 'a splendid rabble rout.' Then fancy that fragile, delicate creature going to the sight (that is the greatest marvel to my mind) and the prisoner claiming her as his daughter before the constables, and all, calling on Ermiston to confirm his statement from his former engagement, and consequent knowledge of her connections. It must have been capital fun! I would have given a thousand pounds to have been there. Ermiston's horror, absolute horror at the appeal; and being held up to the vulgar rabble as the son-in-law of such a wretch must have been superb. I wonder he survived the shock; and am no longer surprised at his having been so dull and stupid last night. But really Ermiston you should go and say a civil thing to the young lady; you know she could not help having such a papa. Come with me

now," passing his arm within his, in full enjoyment of his vexation.

"Cease this folly!" cried his Lordship, snatching away his arm with a look and tone, that for a moment checked his tormentor—but only for a moment.

"You will not? Well then, I must go and say pretty things for you—that is if you will give me leave, and promise not to be jealous."

"You are at liberty to act as you please for yourself, Mr. Ward; but I insist upon it that you do not render my name ridiculous through your nonsense."

"Your most obedient, humble servant," replied Mr. Ward taking off his hat, and bowing to the ground. "Then you give up the lady, or the lady has given up you; and you graciously grant me permission to play the pretty to her."

"Miss Darrell is—can be nothing to me," observed his Lordship proudly.

"She shall be something to me then. Such a flirtation! you shall be jealous despite your pride."

"What does Ward mean?" asked Herbert Eustace hearing only his last remark.

"To have some fun, as he calls it, with that vulgar woman's companion," replied Lady Richmond.

"And you could permit this Ermiston? Has not the poor girl trials enough, but you must join with her hard fate against her?"

"I have no right to interfere," remarked his Lordship haughtily, colouring at the rebuke.

"You never could have loved her," said Herbert Eustace contemptuously, as he passed him to follow Ward, who was already annoying Katharine by his impertinent flatteries, whilst Mrs. Dixon was conversing with a fellow passenger.

After enquiring with marked respect if the rest he had recommended had recruited her,

he freed her from her disagreeable companion by saying that he wished to consult him about the carriage; but, dusk as it was, for night was coming on, Katharine could see from their manner that the subject they were discussing was one of no common interest; and on which there was apparently a difference of opinion.

"It is getting cold. Do bring me that cloak lying by the chimney," said Mrs. Dixon.

Katharine obeyed, and as she approached the speakers unperceived, from the darkness, she heard Ward say, "If you will admit, that you mean her to be Mrs. Eustace, of course I have done; if not, a companion is always fair game; I only want a little fun, and Ermiston did not object."

"For shame, Ward! her very dependance should be her protection from annoyance to a man of feeling and honor."

"Is she to be Mrs. Eustace?"

"Never! but I will guard her from impertinence."

Katharine heard no more:—having found the cloak she returned to Mrs. Dixon:—she had heard enough!—

What a prospect for her future life? She could not always have Herbert Eustace to protect her. She had given him trouble enough already. She reproached herself for not being sufficiently grateful, and then, doubtless as a means whereby to increase her gratitude, she thought of his abrupt and decided, nay, she fancied contemptuous "never!" when asked if she were to be Mrs. Eustace:—a never, the tone of which, said still more plainly than the word, that such an idea was not—never could be in his mind.

And Katharine was hurt, piqued at this;—not that she had the slightest desire to be Mrs. Eustace—not that she wished him to desire it, for never was being further removed from a coquette; but then his never need not

have been quite so decided, and contemptuous. He had thought of her once—yes once—but now!—now! yet his contempt, his abrupt denial, knowing as he knew her father, was more than justified. He was not to be blamed she said to herself, and yet in her heart she did blame him severely, whilst glossing over, or striving to forget the selfish fastidiousness of Lord Ermiston; and this secret censure caused a restraint in her manner, when he joined her soon after, having, as it appeared, induced Mr. Ward to abandon his ungenerous scheme of having fun with the companion.

She fancied amid all his attention to her wants, and wishes, the same something that she had fancied before—something different to what his manner had been to her in former days—to what it now was to others:—a something meant to say, "I will be your friend, but you must be made to feel that I can never again be your lover." She had no right to blame him if such was his intention, as their

encounter in the Castle Court had been their first meeting since the breaking off of her engagement with his cousin; but as we have said, she did blame him in her heart, shocked that he should think such a guarded manner requisite; and so languid were her endeavours to keep up the conversation, that remarking he feared she was suffering from fatigue, to which she assented, adding that she had a headache, he ceased to talk, and soon after quitted her side.

Poor Katharine had little heart that day for the beauties of nature, so it mattered not that it was dark when she passed up the Avon. Had it been broad daylight, Cook's Folly with its touching, and mysterious legend.—Nightingale Valley with its spell like, dreamy beauty would have been unadmired:—her thoughts were busy with the world within—what to her was the world without? St. Vincent's rocks stood out a dark and giant mass beneath a pale new moon their very outline shrouded in obscu-

rity, lights gleamed and glanced above, below, from the houses scattered amid the trees. The windows of the Paragon showed like a crescent of glow-worms, now seen, now lost; yet Katharine saw none of this—knew not that her voyage was nearly completed, till the speaking trumpet of the Captain on the paddle box, and the cries of "Let go her anchor!" "Wear her round!" "Port a helm!" and other unintelligible terms, uttered in no gentle whisper, disturbed her reverie, deep as it had been; and the grating of the vessel againt the side of the basin some short time after, would have told her they had arrived at their destined port, had not the mutual congratulations of some of the passengers, the noice and confused mingling of many voices, and the rush on deck of porters, and hotel puffers, assured her of the fact.

What a Babel of sounds! What a labyrinth of confusion!

"Where are my trunks?"—"That is mine

if you please, Sir, there is my name on the top,"—"I'll thank you ma'am, to let that carpet bag alone, it belongs to me."—"Keep this Mary, whilst I look for your box." "Please to want a porter, I'll take your trunks for you any where, sir." Vant beds ma'am?" "Here's the Gloucester close by, excellent beds." "Vant lodging for the night sir? Here's the Albion—just three steps off—capital accommodation—can't be better." "Stop stop sir! that is my umbrella you are carrying off." "Bring the light this way steward, I can't find my portmanteau anywhere," cried a hoarse voice. "Stop a minute, till I have just found my daughter's basket," replied a squeeking one. "Tom, Tom, that man has run off with the dried salmon." "Please to want a porter sir?" "Van't a porter ma'am? I'm the boy to suit ye." "Would not you like a fly ma'am? here is No. 36 capital horse and fly!" "Here is No. 29, sir, can't be a better fly no-where!" "Boy boy, lower the light,

or I shall be in the bason : I'm half in now." "Please ma'am not to push so, I can't get up the steps any faster, there is a fat gentleman before can't pass the boy with the lantern." "Can't you stand the other side my boy." "Noa, Noa, I knows better nor that I should be shoved into the water."

Such were some of the cries which came in strange confusion to the ears of the bewildered Katharine, who had never before been on board a steamer, or landed at Bristol about twelve o'clock at night. All seemed crowding, talking, scuffling, shouting, scolding. How was this disorder ever to be reduced to order?

How was she ever to land in safety? She looked round but the night was too dark for her to see more than some dusky buildings, and the gleaming lights on the other side of the water: and nearer, bridges, and the masts and chimnies of steamers, which looked unnatural objects in the gloom.

"Why don't you look after your trunk? Some one will take it if you don't have a care: I have found mine," said Mrs. Dixon addressing Katharine sharply.

The loss of her trunk would certainly be no inconsiderable loss, but how was she to press through the crowd at that part of the vessel where the luggage was stowed to look for it?

"Can I be of any service to you Miss Darrell?" asked Herbert Eustace as if divining her difficulty.

"Thank you; will you be kind enough to find the trunk, which you rescued for me once before to-day?"

Her heart reproached her for her want of gratitude as he went on the instant to fulfil her wishes, returning in a few moments with one of the sailors carrying the trunk.

"Come along, Eustace; we are going, and cannot wait for you any longer," said Mr.

Ward, passing at the moment with Lady Richmond leaning on his arm, Miss Clarendon following with Lord Ermiston.

A movement among the crowd pressed the latter so near to Katharine that his clothes brushed her's.

"I beg your pardon," he said with cold politeness.

Katharine merely bowed; and he passed on.

This was the only notice he had taken of her—the only words he had spoken to her throughout the day.

"Do not wait for me, I will join you at the Gloucester," replied Herbert, turning again to Mrs. Dixon and her companion, "can I be of any service in procuring you a porter, or a fly, or in seeing you safe on shore?"

Katharine would have most thankfully accepted the offer; but Mrs. Dixon declined it, saying that she had already made every arrangement, and begging that she might not detain him.

It was so evidently her desire to get rid of him, that he could not but depart.

"Good night, and good bye, Miss Darrell; and I hope our next meeting will be under brighter skies," glancing up at the dark vault above them, and leaving her to interpret his meaning as she pleased, literally, or metaphorically.

"I ought to thank you, Mr. Eustace," began Katharine.

"No, you ought not:—gratitude is a pleasure to be felt, not a duty to be enforced; I should thank you for allowing me to serve you. Once more, good bye!"

Before she could reply he was gone, and the wearying,worrying, vexations, of this wearying, worrying, work-a-day world, prevented her mind from dwelling on the suspicion that he had read her thoughts, and knew her gratitude was not likely to be carried to excess.

"Mr. Eustace is a very pleasant, and polite young man; but he does not care how he

throws away money. I was not going to let him get me a porter, or a fly, and pay just what was asked."

"Have you neither fly, nor porter then?" exclaimed poor Katharine.

"Not yet. I shall make a better bargain by waiting."

"I do not wish to hurry you ma'am," said the Captain, with just the manner calculated to do what he did not intend; "but the steamer is just going through the lock into the other bason, and there may be some difficulty in landing; nearly every one else is gone. Here is a porter who will take your things to the Gloucester."

"I am not going to the Gloucester; I am going to Stapleton."

"You had better stop at the Gloucester to-night; we are the last packet, and you will scarcely get a fly;" he remarked, more in pity to Katharine, than from any favor to Mrs. Dixon.

"I am not such a simpleton as to pay a long bill at the Gloucester, when I have a home ready for me at Stapleton."

"Just as you please, ma'am, only you must either go on shore directly, or wait till the steamer gets into the basin, which may not be this half hour, and then you will find no fly."

So said the steward, and the stewardess, not out of good will, for her largess had been too small to acquire that, but for the purpose of getting rid of her.

Thus pressed she had no alternative but to close with the offer of the only porter left, making a worse bargain than she would have done, had she departed sooner. Mrs. Dixon was left to make her way alone out of the vessel, and up the narrow stair leading from the water, without a protecting rail, and scantily lit; but the Captain himself assisted Katharine, and thankful was she for his assistance. Even familiar places seem strange by night,

and strange places stranger still; and when she had climbed the narrow stair in safety, and looked around, there seemed to her inexperienced eye nothing but strips of water with high walled barriers, and innumerable bridges; which strips and innumerable bridges must be crossed, dark as was the night, for they had landed on the Bedminster side where no flies were to be had, and they must pass the docks, or the locks, or whatever they were to be called, before they could procure a conveyance.

"Follow me ma'am," cried the porter, "I'll show you the way."

Mrs. Dixon and Katharine tried to follow him, but were soon left behind, bewildered by the darkness which made them cautious to advance.

The first bridge was passed in safety, but what was then to be done?

They were on a long, narrow strip of land between two streams of water, and no apparent

means of crossing the one before them, indeed but for a brief glimmer of light Mrs. Dixon, who was in advance, would have fallen into the lock.

"We are wrong—we must go back."

They went back to the bridge over which they had just passed, but it swung from them on the instant to admit the passage of a steamer coming up with its hoarse, rumbling noise.

Mrs. Dixon and Katharine stood aghast—the porter was out of sight and hearing too, it seemed, for he did not answer to the former's call, and they could see no one near them. What was to be done?

"There must be a bridge to the other side, I think I can discover one," said Katharine. peering through the gloom. "Yes here it is!" she exclaimed delighted at the discovery, and only waiting for Mrs. Dixon to join her. Her foot was on the bridge, when she was pulled back with some violence, and the exclamation

—"Is the woman mad? Do you want to be drowned?"

"Certainly not," replied Katharine half smiling at the question; "but we want to go to Dorry, or Dowry Square, or some such place, where there are flies."

"Flies this time of night!" cried the man who had pulled her back. "Dowry Square, and so you meant to get over like a rat, swimming and climbing."

"No indeed, I meant to go over the bridge," she replied, half provoked and half amused.

"Go over the bridge! Why don't ye see it's swinging round now? ye'd have been in the water in the twinkling of an eye if I had not caught ye. But there's just time; t'other bridge ain't opened yet. Come along! quick," and seizing a hand of both he dragged them full speed down one little slope, up another, and then one by one across a narrow bridge of planks with no defence, but a light rail on the upper side, the light from

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"Thank you, my good
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or any where else. She argued, scolded, threatened—the man did the like;—the watch came to know what was the matter—some late idlers collected round, laughing and making comments any thing but flattering, till poor Katharine, finding her endeavours to quiet Mrs. Dixon only increased her wrath, and overcome by the trials of the day, sat down on one of the trunks, giving way to the tears which she had no longer the power to control.

"Poor thing! I am sorry for her," said some of the bystanders.

"Yes, she's a different body."

"What can I do for ye?" asked their former guide, joining the crowd.

"Only get us a fly," replied Katharine, delighted at his presence, hoping that he would again stand her friend.

"Flies! Bless your pretty face, they be all gone to bed."

"Has there been any accident?" asked a gentleman, passing with his servant, before

the laugh caused by this reply and its singular manner of utterance had subsided.

"Oh Mr. Eustace! can you?—will you?—you offered"—exclaimed the almost despairing Katharine in broken words.

"I will do any thing to serve, Miss Darrell," replied that gentleman, springing to her side, and drawing her arm within his, for she had risen as she spoke. "What has happened? What can I do for you?"

A few moments explained her wishes—a few more accomplished them. The porter was paid, and dismissed—the crowd dispersed—the watch were satisfied that their duty required no committal—and the servant, Lord Ermiston's, though Herbert did not say so, sent to procure a fly; whilst Mr. Eustace himself remained to protect the ladies, Mrs. Dixon refusing to go to the Gloucester, lest she should have to pay for the shelter.

"Please to tell your servant, sir, that I won't pay ten shillings for a fly to Stapleton, because

it is late, as that man declared I must," said Mrs. Dixon to her protector, still in a rage though obliged for his interference.

"I will take care of that," said Herbert giving the servant orders in a low voice.

It was long before the fly arrived, and there sat the three on the trunks in Dowry Square, Mrs Dixon detailing her grievances, perfectly unconsious of the little heed paid to her lamentations by her companions; whilst Katharine pale and trembling, checking her weeping as she best could, tried occasionally to thank Mr. Eustace, who was doing his utmost to soothe her, speaking too low to disturb Mrs. Dixon, wrapping her cloak more closely round her to shield her from the night air, asserting his pleasure in serving her; and now and then chiming in with the elder lady with marvellous propriety, considering that he did not hear above one word in ten of her angry discourse.

"Here comes the fly," exclaimed Mrs. Dixon joyfully.

"You had better let the servant see you safe home, and he will take care that the flyman makes no attempt to impose upon you;" observed Mr. Eustace.

"I am sure I am much obliged to you; and shall be happy to see you over at Stapleton to lunch."

"Thank you; but I go to town early to-morrow; we poor Barristers cannot do our own pleasure. I am truly glad that the servant's negligence, by obliging me to return to the packet, enabled me to assist you. Will you direct the flyman where to put the luggage."

The next moment he was standing a little apart with Katharine, holding her hand in his whilst speaking to her with a warm friend's earnestness. "Do not think me impertinent in asking if your stay with this sordid woman is from necessity, or choice."

"Necessity."

"Is she a relative?"

"Oh, no! but I am without friends, and can procure no other situation. As long as I have health to bear, I must:—and then go to the parish I suppose."

"Good heavens! I am shocked—deeply shocked—" he exclaimed, his unsteady voice proving the truth of his assertion. "Surely you have some friends."

"None! None, but two faithful servants, and I cannot—will not live upon their savings."

"Come, Miss Darrell; don't stand talking there;" cried Mrs. Dixon from the fly.

"I would thank you for your kindness Mr. Eustace—but I cannot. Do not think I have not felt it?"

He started at her words from his momentary abstraction.

"You have one friend, Miss Darrell, though he may not be a very efficient one. A poor Barrister is a different person from a rich Baronet; but if Herbert Eustace can aid you, do not deprive him of the pleasure by any

timid scruples. Ever count upon him as a friend. Heaven bless you! Keep up your spirits!—we may meet again ere long."

Katharine could not speak; but she returned the kindly pressure of his hand; he bowed to both the ladies, and the fly drove off.

The following day revealed the cause of Mrs. Dixon's abode at Stapleton. Seeing little chance of contracting a marriage with one of much more elevated rank than her own, she had settled there for a time, under the pretence of business, for the purpose of meeting a lover of her younger days, (the Captain of a vessel in the West India trade) who had amassed a tolerable fortune by his industry and integrity.

A few hours explained to Katharine the wishes of Mrs. Dixon; but a few days unfortunately revealed to her that the wishes of Captain Blacklock were no longer exactly similar. The blunt Captain fell in love with the delicate companion, instead of the vulgar

mistress; and in spite of Katharine's coldness and the dictates of prudence, made an offer of his hand and heart to the poor young spinster, instead of the rich elderly widow.

"I am not young; and I am not a fine gentleman; but I am an honest spoken, English sailor; and if you will have me, I will try and make you happy," was the blunt address of the plain, kindhearted Captain, on accidentally finding Katharine alone in one of his daily visits to the widow.

"Well if you won't have me, I can't help it, so it is of no use to say more about it. I wish you happy any how; and a more comfortable home," was his blunt reply on his proposal being declined, leaving the house without seeing Mrs. Dixon.

Before many hours Katharine with her bundle, as Mrs. Dixon chose to designate the very trunk against whose size and weight she had declaimed at Swansea, was in a fly, on her way to Bristol, after enduring the rage of that

gentle lady, who had learnt (how she did not explain) that her companion had superseded her in the good graces of her former lover, making herself agreeable to her visitors, when she was only hired to make herself useful to her. Of course this could not have been accomplished by fair means; no one could have preferred the companion to her, but through manœuvring or coquetry, so she was fully justified in turning her out of the house on the instant, and refusing to pay the arrears of salary, declaring that she would publish her character to the world.

To appeal from this decision would have been useless; and so great was her fury, that Katharine might well be thankful that words were not succeeded by blows.

Had she possessed but the faintest prospect of any other situation, her sudden dismissal would have been considered as a blessing, rather than a misfortune, for she was ill able to endure the constant vexations of such a

companionship—but she had no hope of procuring employment, and no home to go to but the Carters; whilst her small means, diminished by the sum paid to her father, and her yearly expences (for Mrs. Dixon had expected from her far more than her scanty salary could furnish) would not support her long. Dependant on the Carters she could not, and she would not be.

This was in some degree a remote evil; but petty present vexations were also pressing on her. She had never travelled by herself before—she did not even know the nearest route to B——; and to go to a strange inn, among strange waiters, and strange porters, and strange coachmen (not to speak of strange passengers) was naturally a subject of dread and anxiety to one who had never before been so circumstanced; having been so delicately brought up, and lovingly attended. But there was no alternative, and having told

the driver to take her to the White Lion, she was endeavouring to arrange her plans, when a call—to stop, and the almost simultaneous opening of the fly door, by a man shabbily dressed, disturbed all her arrangements, filling her mind with other fears.

The voice and the features were not to be mistaken—they were those of her dreaded father; and she involuntarily shrank back into the farthest corner, compressing herself into as small a space as possible on his springing into the fly, and taking a seat beside her. He saw her alarm, and a grim smile showed that he did so.

"Don't be frightened, Kate; I mean you no harm, nay, I will do you good; but it must be in my own way, and at my own time. Where are you going? I know why you were turned out of doors; there are old fools as well as young ones."

"I am going to B——."

"I thought as much; but you must go some where else. Your mother is ill, very ill at Cowford; and you must go and nurse her: I can't go myself; but I can trust you. Be kind to her; and say kind things from me, for she will like to hear them; and God knows, poor thing, she has not heard them from me as often as she should. It was a sad day for her when she became my wife, for I have brought her much evil, and little good; and yet she loves me still. Poor Ann!"

For some moments he appeared lost in recollection, and his daughter was surprised at the softened expression of his features; she had not believed him capable of so much feeling. Even when he spoke again it was not with his usual harshness;—his ordinary reckless look and speech were tempered down so as to be less alarming to his hearer.

"You must go to Cowford directly, and not loiter by the way. You are a dutiful child, and behaved well at Swansea, though you did

not much like to own me for your father, which was natural enough. I was a fool to get into that scrape! And Herbert Eustace behaved well too; but for the Earl of Ermiston, your false lover, he shall rue the part he took;—he shall sue, and not be heard;—he shall be crushed, before you;—you shall triumph! you shall put your foot upon his neck! I hate him for his cowardly spirit."

"Do not hate him! I have no wish to triumph," said Kate earnestly, shrinking at his tone, which had more than its usual fierceness.

"What you love him still? Weak fool!"

"No, but I cannot wish him harm."

"No?—I tell you yes! or you would wish him harm—would seek revenge. Psha! I forget that you are not a man. Smile on a woman, and she leaves you!—spurn her, and she will follow through the world. You are a fool, Kate! a poor weak fool!—so was Ann before you, poor Ann! No matter; you shall

have the means of revenge, and then—you may throw them away if you will—and as you will; and become the coward's wife:—that is your look out, not mine. Do you hear? Make haste to your mother. You look doubtful, Katharine Darrell. Do you mean to dispute my bidding? I tell you plainly; you shall do my will, till I cease to bid you."

"I will do your bidding, as I should: but I know not the way to Cowford; and it is so strange to me this travelling alone."

"Oh, that is it! And you are so fond of me that you would coax me to go with you?"

Katharine turned away from the grim archness of his look and tone, shrinking closer into the corner at the loud laugh which followed the remark.

"Won't you coax me to go with you? Then you must go alone: but I'll give you

directions, because you are not afraid of me."

And he did give her directions, so full, so clear, as to prove him well acquainted with practical geography.

"Now go, and make haste! Order the people about at the inns as if you were somebody;—be a good girl—a dutiful daughter," with another grim smile, "and it shall be the better for you."

Without waiting for a reply, he jumped out of the fly, shut too the door, ordered the man to drive on, and springing over a stile by the road side was soon lost to view.

To order people about as though she were somebody was not at all in accordance with Katharine's nature, and the advice had probably been given in derision; but her gentle manner and delicate appearance won her a way through all her travelling difficulties, and

enabled her to reach Cowford undevoured by porters or coachmen, and what was still more remarkable, without the loss of any of her luggage, a fact rendered credible by her having only one trunk, and a cloak to take care of besides herself.

CHAPTER VII.

"Night spreads her mantle o'er the sky,
And all around are sleeping,
While I in tears of agony,
My restless couch am steeping.
I sigh for morn,—the rising day
Awakes the earth to gladness;
I turn with sick'ning soul away,—
It smiles upon my sadness."

Dale.

"Who comes with kindly word and smile,
With hope once more the heart to guile?"

Poor Kate! of all the places in the world, save and except Sallowfield and Beechen Cliff, Cowford was the very last that she would

have visited with her own free will, under existing circumstances. Far from objecting, she would have found pleasure in going thither had she still been the petted favorite of Mrs. Arnold; but now, bankrupt in hopes, in wealth, in friends, she naturally felt some repugnance to revisit the scene of her former humiliation. Her residence with Mrs. Dixon had shown her that the world was not all as bright as she had thought—its inhabitants not all as good and kind as she had believed. She had been introduced to scandal, envy, malice, and their numerous progeny; and had been so long accustomed to be always in the wrong that she more than suspected, act as she would, her conduct would not please all the curious eyes which would be upon her, since little Kate, for a time at least, must expect to be the talk and wonder of the village. With the mind and manners of a lady; the fortune of a beggar; and the nurse of a crazy mother, ridiculous in her misfortune, how was she to

escape the innumerable shocks and vexations which such an unhappy combination must bring upon her? Katharine Darrell was a commonplace—a very commonplace person;—she did what millions have done before, and will do again; she imagined, as she thought, every vexation which could beset her, wept over the melancholy catalogue, and then, unable to devise a remedy, submitted to the infliction.

Out rushed Mr. Binks as the chaise which she had been compelled to take at the last town, no coach passing within many miles of Cowford, drove into the 'inn yard—out came Mrs. Binks to greet the new arrival, and help to usher her into the best parlour, both wondering, as well they might, what such a delicate, elegant creature—a lady every bit of her, her hostess said—could purpose in coming to the King's Head at Cowford, evidently with the intention of remaining, since the chaise had been paid for, and the post boy

was instantly feed. Little did the worthy landlord and landlady think to whom they were paying such honor, bustling themselves and every one else, and making a hundred apologies for the smell of tobacco, and things being all of a caddle in the best room, just as they had apologised to Mrs. Arnold more than ten years before; time that had bowed their forms and lessened their activity, having left the character of their minds unchanged. Mrs. Binks was still kind hearted, bustling, curious and fond of ruling; Mr. Binks still willing to oblige, and submitting to be ruled. Since the tale must be told Katharine's natural frankness induced her to avoid all appearance of concealment.

"You do not know me, Mrs. Binks," she began, addressing the landlady, who was brushing down a side table with her apron, after having blown the dust from a clay parrot on the mantelpiece.

"A brotherless *parrot* the last of its race!"

which had survived the wreck of time, and was flanked by new ornaments, instead of the old cats. "You have quite forgotten little Kate Darrell, to whom you were once so kind."

"Bless me, you little Kate Darrell!" exclaimed the staring, and incredulous landlady. "Impossible! It can't be! You are a lady all over. To be sure little Kate was a good little girl, and a pretty one too, to my mind, if she had been nicely drest; but then you look a born lady; and she was only crazy Nan's child. You are only joking with me, ma'am."

"I am not joking," replied Katharine sadly; "but am come to nurse my mother," she added after a slight hesitation.

"Well to be sure! who could have thought it? You to turn out such a sweet looking lady, though so sad; not a bit like little Kate, who was the merriest child eyes ever looked upon, though she led such a life. But then I dare say you be very happy, all the same; and that

is only as a lady should look. Gentlefolks must not laugh, and talk merry as we do, I have heard say; and I suppose you are very rich now. And pray Miss how is Mrs. Arnold?—the gentlest and the kindest lady I ever seed, if I may be so bold as to ax."

Katharine could hear no more. These questions and remarks, each a pang, as forcing more strongly on her mind the contrast of the present to the past, tried her beyond endurance, and a passionate burst of tears was her sole reply.

Mrs. Binks cried in sympathy, beginning to suspect something of the truth; and showed so much kindness and good feeling that Katharine explained all that it was desirable she should explain; and soon after sought her mother accompanied by her landlady, who indulged in endless expressions of wonder, surprise, and regret, that little Kate was not quite a lady, after all—at least in wealth. Nor had Katharine any cause to repent her

confidence. If Mrs. Binks sometimes assumed rather a patronizing air, advising and managing, this patronage was mingled with so much real, active kindness, and involuntary respect, that she found in her a valuable, though humble friend, ready to stand up in her defence against the envious and the malicious who quarrelled with manners and refinement so incompatible with her birth and present station; or to join in the praise bestowed by those who pitied and admired her.

And many were there among the simple villagers of Cowford, who did both pity and admire, showing their good will by a thousand little acts of kindness,—moaning over her declining health, deciding that she was too gentle and too clever to live long.

Katharine found her mother better than she had expected; and partly owing to her judicious nursing, poor Nan was soon restored to comparative health.

Some weeks had passed and Kate sat alone

at the open casement of her little room, looking out on that very green on which she had first met Mrs. Arnold. She had husbanded her little means with great frugality; but her journey down to Cowford, her necessary expences since, sparing as she had been for herself, only purchasing luxuries for her mother, had nearly expended her scanty funds —and where might she look for more? To repay Mrs. Dixon the sum advanced at Swansea, she had received through Mrs. Carter, whilst at Stapleton, all that remained of the two hundred pounds, given by Mr. Millar; and save by the sale of a few articles, gifts from Mrs. Arnold, which it would grieve her to part with—how was she to obtain a further supply? Allowing that she would accept money from Mrs. Carter as a loan, till she could turn her talents to some account; there seemed no chance of her being put to the trial. She had written to B—— immediately on reaching Cowford, stating every particular connected

with her leaving Mrs. Dixon; yet more than a month had passed, and she had received no reply. Had Mrs. Carter to whom she had learnt to cling with an almost child-like love—her only friend on earth—had she too thrown her off? And was she then quite alone amid a thickly peopled world? Cared for by none? An outcast and a beggar? No tears came into her eyes as her heart told her that she was alone!—friendless!—helpless!—almost penniless! The feeling was too deep for tears; and she looked out even on that very spot where she had first met Mrs. Arnold with a dry, and burning eye;—she saw the flood of sunshine resting on that verdant green—she marked the village children at their play, making dirt pies, ranging pieces of earthenware, as she had done of old—she heard their happy laughs, their merry shouts—the gladsome singing of the wild birds near;—she saw and felt all this—she saw and felt it as a mockery—and yet she did not weep!—She

had ceased to weep, as she had ceased to hope! The trials of the last few months had done the work of years upon her fragile form, and on her warm and affectionate heart. She had borne up against the coldness, the harshness of the many; but she sank beneath the cruelty of the one!—she had endured Mrs. Dixon's sneers and snarls with comparative cheerfulness; but Ermiston's desertion—his open contempt—had bowed her naturally buoyant spirit; and the many disagreeables of her residence at Cowford; the nursing—the constant companionship with her poor crazy mother—the silence of Mrs. Carter—the absolute beggary that threatened her, and her failing health—all combined to crush her to the earth.

The fanciful vagaries of her mother now ever before her notice, pressed heavily on her sad heart; and the thought was growing that, if death should not release her soon, and save her from the doom, she too might be like her

a senseless wanderer. Any fate but that! rather, far rather death! there was not one to mourn her! Why should she live of use to none?—unloving and unloved? It never could be meant!—the doom of an early grave was on her—a happier doom than a long cheerless life—a life dragged on in want and woe. Her fate was leading on to death; and she pined for the closing hour, praying that it might be ere she was quite a beggar—pined for death with the impatient longing of a worn out spirit, who had none to soothe it. The clinging that youth has to life was gone from her.

It was beautiful! morally beautiful; to see her tender nursing of her fantastic mother, never shrinking from the meanest act of duty, though often shuddering at that mother's presence, thinking how their meeting had blighted all her hopes. It was beautiful to see her in her mourning dress, which she had never laid aside, moving about that humble room with

the gentle grace of a being of high birth and breeding, catching the lowest whisper of that poor, crazy creature—waiting on her faintest wish—listening with soothing patience to the fantastic ravings of her bewildered mind; or replying with a winning, grateful, graciousness to the simple courtesies and humble kindness of her poor neighbours;—but if a beautiful, it was a sad sight too, to look upon—to see her fading—wasting—day by day, till scarce a vestige of the loveliness of youth remained. The glowing cheek now pale and sunken—the glancing eye hollow and dim—the rounded form worn down to a mere shadow—the once bounding step now slow and feeble;—no witching smile on the wan lip—that laugh, the very voice of joyousness, no longer heard. And it was sadder still to think that she was fading thus without one gentle word of sympathy—not one to say—"live Katharine for me!" She yielded to the fancy that a doom was on her—that she was scorned by all—

that man marked not her misery—that heaven pitied it not;—that she must die—unwept—'unsoothed'—unmourned!

"Oh that she were at rest!"

The less her mother required her attention the stronger grew the belief of her own early death; and the more the enfeebled body aided the enfeebled mind to prey upon itself.

She turned from the open window, where all looked gay and joyous, to attend to some humble cookery on the fire; and as she returned to her seat she paused for a moment to gaze at herself in a small glass, not from vanity, but to mark the increasing wanness of her cheek, the daily fading of her form.

"It will soon be over now!" she said to herself with a sad smile, if any thing so rending to the heart as that slight wreathing of the lips, could be allowed to bear the name of aught so beautiful. For what so beautiful as smiles? "It will be soon over now! and I am glad I shall be buried here—here, where

she found me—here let me die—unwept—unmourned;—here pay the penalty attached to years of happiness. I had hoped to rest by her, but they would not let it be;—the beggar and the outcast must not rest beside the wealthy and the honored. Oh that I had died with her! Why nurse me back to life that I might bear this woe? But two years back, what was I then?—and oh! what am I now?"

Her tearless eye glanced round the room with a sudden wildness, marking the contrast of each object there, with all that she had been accustomed to at Beechen Cliff. The many humiliations she had endured, the want of harmony between her birth and tastes, rushed on her mind with harrowing force; she started up with a low cry of pain—then sank again on her seat, hiding her face for shame, that these things should so have moved her.

The fate to which Mrs. Arnold had resolved that she should never be subjected—was hers!

the fretting—the pining away of the petted and refined, amid neglect and penury. Could she have guessed on her dying bed how the Millars would fulfil their promise—could she have looked forward into time and seen the child of her love as she was at this moment, how bitterly would she have reproached herself for her procrastination! how would her parting hours have been embittered by regret—remorse. The cherished exotic was thrust forth into the wintry air;—what wonder if it folded up its leaves to die?

We all talk of warnings against procrastination—but who heeds them?—who acts upon them?

After a time, Kate raised her head, took up her work, and tried to confine her thoughts to the task of forming some plan by which she might support herself till death should come;—it might not come as soon as she expected. She had no one but herself, except indeed Mrs. Binks, to look to for procuring a situation

however poor; and that kind hearted person only said—"she was so delicate like, that she was not fit for nothing."

She could not make up her mind to write to Mrs. Carter again—she could not apply to Mr. Eustace for advice, the only other person who had offered to serve her—that was impossible! even had she known his address, which she did not. He had said they should meet again—yet they had not met; and were not likely to meet;—she had no right to claim his assistance, and it was not probable that he would force it on her—it was more probable that he had never wasted a thought on her distress after distance had removed it from under his immediate observation.

It was so!—it was natural that it should be so!—He had done much for her, she had no right to expect him to do more—she had no right to blame him for forgetting her, as others had done;—and yet she did blame him—blame him more than Mrs. Carter, though she

said to herself that she did not. She had less regard for him, and therefore she was less inclined to judge him kindly:—she was always ready to blame him—willing to make him pay the penalty for his cousin's selfish weakness, which his kindness had, as it were, thrown out in stronger relief. This was not right—but so it was. How often had she thought of his looks and words as he handed her into the fly.

She was thinking of them still, and half inclined to pronounce him a hypocrite, when there came a low knock at her door.

Her eyes had been so bent on her work, her thoughts on the past and the future, that the present was completely forgotten; and she had seen no one pass through the little wicket in the front of the cottage—heard no one enter the rustic porch. Supposing it to be Mrs. Binks, or her former playfellow little Betty Watts, still so called, though grown a fine

woman, to distinguish her from her mother, she merely said "Come in!" without rising to open the door, not even looking up till in obedience to her bidding the latch had been raised, and some one had entered, who uttered no salutation, but stood silent before her.

It was neither Mrs. Binks nor little Betty Watts—it was he of whom she had been thinking—whom she had been so unjustly blaming—it was Herbert Eustace, standing before her with looks that told how much her care worn face and form had pained and shocked him.

"Mr. Eustace!" exclaimed Katharine starting up in joyful surprise, the work falling from her hands as she advanced to meet him.

"Yes, Herbert Eustace! quite unexpected I can see; but I hope not unwelcome," he replied pressing her hand with friendly warmth.

"Oh no, not unwelcome!—or I should be most ungrateful."

"We will not dispute as to the extent of your gratitude, as my demands I suspect might seem exorbitant; we poor Barristers are obliged to become keen observers," he replied with a half suppressed smile, recalling to her mind the arch gaiety of his manner on their first acquaintance. "Besides I should be the most unreasonable of the unreasonable, if I were not contented with the character you gave of me to Mrs. Carter. She really believes that I rescued you at Bristol from a fiery dragon instead of a grumbling porter; and procured you a gilded coach and six, instead of a dirty fly."

"Mrs. Carter! Have you seen her then?"

"I have; though I had some difficulty in finding her or you, for Mrs. Dixon was silent and sulky: and had I not remembered your naming Mrs. Carter, I might not have discovered you in this lone retreat,"

"Far in a wild, unknown to public view."

"I bring you a letter containing reasons

for her silence, and a thousand pretty things beside; but I will not deliver it till you have offered me a chair, and taken one yourself."

"Has Mrs. Carter really written?—and kind things? then I am not quite—"

"Forgotten and deserted! I know that is what you mean," added her visitor, leading her to a chair, and taking one beside her. "You have moped in this lonely place till you believed yourself forlorn and desolate, without one friend; whereas you have a thousand; for I insist on being reckoned as five hundred and Mrs. Carter and her husband may stand for the other half; nay, besides these I have bespoken many more for you; I have indeed, surprised as you appear, and mean to carry you away with me to-morrow, or the next day at the furthest, and introduce you as my protégée."

Kate shook her head, though trying to smile at his gaiety, assumed to spare her

feelings and his own; and to win her from her sadness.

"No shaking of the head, Miss Darrell, the thing is doomed. Mrs. Carter has appointed me your guardian, and I have joined her in the trust, just for decorum sake."

"Then I am to have no choice."

"None: you are not of age, and must submit. Poor dear Mrs. Carter! as the lamenting say, whether the departed was angel or virago. I intend her to be Mrs. Eustace hereafter, of which I gave due notice to her husband, who, nearly as kind hearted a creature as his wife, promised to die at a convenient time, leaving a particular request that I should succeed him. If you had but seen us flirting together the other night, you would have been amazed."

"Mrs. Carter flirt!" exclaimed Katharine lured into a smile.

"Yes Mrs. Carter flirt! notwithstanding your incredulity: and when I taxed her with being in love with me, instead of a flat contra-

diction, and a drawing up of her stately neck, she only pursed up her mouth a little, and admitted that I was a very kind, delightful young gentleman. Not to be vain I doubt if any one else could have tempted her to the like impropriety; but I pique myself on accomplishing what some would consider impossibilities. I intend you within a few months to be the joyous, hopeful Katharine Darrell of our former days—or something very like it."

"Oh no! that can never be!"

"Yes, but it can! and it shall be, in spite of those clasped hands, and that sad look. Have I tempted the formal Mrs. Carter to a flirtation, and yet you deny my power?"

"You may do much; but you cannot do that."

"I have set my heart on achieving the point; and it must be achieved."

"Do not think it—do not hope it. Can you give me back her whom I have lost? Can

you give back the hop
youth?—those hopes un
that trust unchilled by
You cannot do all this,—
again the joyous, hopefu
The mocking of the wo
ear! The changing of t
on my heart. The misty
dawn, its fancied loveline
reality hath come around
and its gloom. I am wise
and the heart unlearns no
learnt."

Herbert rose—walked
seemed to look out, and
seat

taxing those powers beyond mortal strength. If I cannot create—I can repair. Oh! I am an admirable tinker! mending the holes,

"The wear and tear of life doth make."

If I cannot absolutely unlearn the heart, I can teach it so many new and beautiful things, that its old learning shall grow musty from disuse. Not many minutes since I met a little girl, she was crying piteously, as if her heart were breaking, and she could never smile again. I coaxed her out of the story of her woe.—A great big boy had broken her pet play-thing—I gave her the means to replace it; and there she is out on that sunny green—as sunny as that green. Only hark! to her joyous laugh, bare footed, and bare headed as she is. You see I have brought smiles for tears."

"She is but a child. I was like her once, all hope and joyousness—it was the joyousness of ignorance!—There on that very green,

have not the simple trust of chi
will not believe my words."

"I place trust in your kindnes
in your sincerity; but I no longe
a child, that I may catch the
seem bending down to earth. I
that as I advance they will recede;
I am grown old of late—very old!'

"Old in suspicion, and thus old
but suspicion is not always wis
thought Mrs. Carter had forgotte
thought my parting words were
the sudden ebullition of a transient
have doubted the sincerity of real
lieving, as all sceptics do, tha
wisdom

She turned away from his keen gaze. She had thought his words were idle words.

"Now I mean to subdue this demon suspicion, and free you from his thraldom."

"Can you teach me to forget?"

"I can do nothing whilst you look at me so sadly—you unman me—you make me feeble as yourself. I dare not tell you for my manhood's sake, how much I feel for you. I strive for gaiety to hide my weakness, and you think it levity. I do not blame you for this doubt, I only pity, and would win you back to hope. You shake your head at the bare word—you say within yourself he is a man—he can struggle with the world and wordlings—struggle and subdue;—he does not know what feeble woman suffers—he thinks my trials very light. I do not think your trials light—I have felt—I do feel them to be great. With your feelings and your tastes, the living with that woman must have been torture worthy of the inquisition—and then her inso-

lent dismissal! Mrs. Carter and I have determined to put her in the pillory the first opportunity."

"How did you know?"

"How did I know indeed?—as if a guardian does not know every thing concerning his ward. Patty, the maid, told me a most pathetic history, which Mrs. Carter confirmed from your letter. I behaved uncommonly well I assure you, notwithstanding your incredulity; had only one good laugh at your robbing the old lady of her lover, and then was duly indignant at her insolence, and the blunt Captain's presumption. Mrs. Carter declares that we cried together whilst discussing your wrongs, but this of course I stoutly deny. Now there is little use in feeling for a sorrow, if one does not try to lighten it;—it is of no avail to see the hole in the kettle, if one does not know how to mend it. I felt for the sorrow and resolved to lighten it.—I have found out the hole and am come to mend it.

Within a year you shall admit me to be the best tinker in all his majesty's dominions."

She could not but smile at his gaiety assumed to disperse her gloom; but the smile was sickly, and did not please him. He paused a moment and then spoke in a different tone.

"I am not unfeeling, do not think it. I am shocked to see you here," glancing round the humble room, "to see how you are changed —grieved that I cannot place you as I would in that station which befits you—that I cannot encircle you with the elegancies, the watchful care to which you were so long accustomed. I am no longer Sir Herbert Eustace; and I too have felt something of the world's changing, as you know. Unable to do all I would, I have done all I could; but I fear to agitate you by referring to the past; I fear to submit my project to your notice lest you should disapprove of it. I am afraid you do not think me sufficiently your friend to

believe that I would shrink from nothing which could save you pain."

"You wrong me, Mr. Eustace; I cannot doubt your kindness. Speak; I am stronger than you think;—not so easily moved."

"I hope it may prove so. For a moment I would speak of her whom you have lost, to show why I claim a right to serve you. I was in no good mood when I last met Mrs. Arnold,—I could have quarrelled with any one—I longed to quarrel with some one—she soothed, she rebuked, with a gentle kindness which I could neither resist nor resent. There was in the softness, the repose of her gentle spirit a something peculiarly beautiful and touching to one of my quick temper; and her warning and advice were not forgotten, and I hope not neglected. I bade her look upon me as a friend, ever willing, ever eager to fulfil her wishes in regard to you or to herself. She believed and thanked me, thus accepting the pledge. She is no more; but her adopted

child still lives. Will Miss Darrell refuse that service accepted by Mrs. Arnold?"

"No, no;" said Katharine, holding out her hand, and bursting into tears, the first tears which she had shed for many a day.

"Forgive me that I have made you weep; yet I would rather see those tears than that look of dull despair, which so shocked me when I entered. This hand is a pledge that you accept me as a friend, a brother, and a guardian:—for you are but a child still, though you fancy yourself an old woman," he added, with a smile. "Once I had other thoughts and hopes;—and once—but they are past:—forget them—you shall hear of them no more. And now for my project to which I give you leave to object if you will, only insisting on your believing that I would do better if I could. The gossips will not admit of my asking you to superintend my petty establishment, or I might be tempted to try if I could not outdo Mrs. Dixon in the art of torment-

ing; besides Mrs. Carter would object, so I must place my ward in some other situation. Now I have a dear little creature of a cousin with something of your own warm heart and buoyant spirits, though sobered down by constant illness; with a plain, noble minded husband, who feels more than he says, which is as well, seeing that he says but little; and a fairy of a girl, my wife that is to be, who begins to ask many questions which mamma has not always health to answer. Then my little wife, though one of the most witching little beings imaginable, and doting on her husband, as in duty bound, has been a little spoilt, so I want to coax you to go to Farnley Lodge, and make her just like yourself. Mrs. Colvin's health being very delicate, she will be delighted to have some one to receive and entertain her guests, as well as answer Clara's questions; and I expect very shortly to receive thanks, a piece of plate, and a dinner for having introduced you to each other. I can-

not restore her who is gone—I cannot make you as you were; but I can promise every kindness from my cousin—her regard and esteem you will soon acquire for yourself. This letter will explain her wishes. The duties of my profession prevented my seeing my cousin immediately after I parted with you; and when all was arranged with her I spent many days in seeking you. They were not idle words that I said at parting—we have met again, and I will hope under a brighter sky."

"Then I am not deserted—not friendless! How very sinful I have been! my fretfulness and murmuring rise up against me, and condemn me. Such rich blessings for so many years, and yet to doubt God's providence and care! I do not deserve this kindness, Mr. Eustace;—not from you—not from any," exclaimed the weeping Katharine self rebuked for her late despair.

"There would be far greater woe than there

is in the world already, if we had all our deservings; in that case I fear I should be denied the pleasure of introducing you to my cousin. Your trials have been hard for one so young; but we will hope for brighter days, or should other trials come, do not let us, by doubting and mistrusting, barb and poison the arrows of misfortune. You may well smile at my tutoring you in this manner, I who have learnt the lesson so recently myself, and so imperfectly; but those who know the least, and have learnt that little lately are ever the most inclined to teach, so I am but natural; and you will excuse my playing guardian and advising."

"Not excuse, but thank you; I have indeed been very wrong."

"It is not for me to say so, who wasted wealth and time, and then rebelled when that wasted wealth was taken from me. The world said I bore my loss as a philosopher—I did not bear it as a christian. The world saw

only the smiling lip—heard only the merry jest;—it did not see how I writhed in secret at the change my loss had wrought—how I pined for those very flatteries which I had once pretended to despise. I owe Mrs. Arnold much;—I should not have borne a rebuke less gentle, less affectionate; then I despised others—I have since learnt to despise myself, and thus regard mankind more justly. He who feels his own deficiences will be a charitable judge for his own sake, so you see mine is but a more refined selfishness after all," he added with a smile. "Here have I under pretence of lecturing you, been boasting of my own wisdom; yet am I the most unwise of creatures after all, suffering you to weep and dim the lustre of those speaking eyes, when I have set my heart on seeing them dance again in brightness, as they used to do. I described you to my cousin as of happy temper, and of sunny mind, and for my sake, you must not belie my words. 'Ah! Herbert

said my saucy cousin, 'how much of this may I believe? I know you of old; never man wove such pretty tales, despite Messrs. Bell and Bampton.' Fie upon you Mary replied I thus to throw in my teeth my former crimes. I have ceased telling good stories since I ceased to be a Baronet; you may believe every word I say.—'You do not even exaggerate Herbert?'—Mary, I am affronted and will say no more. See Miss Darrell—know her—and then if you convict me, though only of exaggeration inflict what penalty you choose—if you acquit me, I inflict the punishment. So really Miss Darrell you must hush those sobs, and call back your brightest smiles to preserve my honor. Surely you will not condemn me to a penance?"

"Not willingly!" said Katharine smiling through her tears; "but you have been too bold, I cannot—"

"Yes, you can"—interrupting her, "that April smile would win a verdict in my favor

any where. It is all settled; and you go with me to Farnley Lodge to-morrow."

"So soon?"

"Ay, I was afraid you would think me impatient, and arbitrary; but I am a man of business now, not an idle man of pleasure; briefs are pouring in upon me; and I am sure their Lordships the Judges have a peculiar pleasure in listening to my pleading; so that I cannot control my movements as I would. Mrs. Carter, owing to the sudden illness of her husband, not being able to become your escort, as she had intended, has made me her deputy, and I am not only anxious to introduce you to my cousin myself, but desirous of taking you from this lonely spot to other scenes, and other air, for you are changed—sadly changed, although it may seem rude to say so. I could put off the journey another day, though I would rather not. What say you?"

"Oh! to-morrow, as it suits you;—and yet—"

"Yet what? A ward should tell all her troubles to her guardians."

She hesitated, looking embarrassed; and he laughed.

"A lady's reason for delay, I'll wager my next brief. Crape, muslin, and silk, are not quite *à la mode*, and you wish to consult the milliner. Lay the blame on me; and I will maintain that you are above all the frivolities of your sex."

"Then wager and lose," said Katharine with a laugh almost as light as his own. "I never thought of crape, muslin or silk, and you have done most unwisely in raising such an objection to a speedy departure, for I am by no means above the frivolities of my sex. It was not of my dress I thought—it was of my mother," she added, her sudden gaiety changed into sadness and embarrassment. "She may

object to my going. And did you tell your cousin of my poor mother?"

"I told her all—every thing—convinced that I but anticipated your wishes, and anxious to engage my cousin's sympathy and kindness. You do not blame me?"

"No; I thank you. I would have all known, though I shrink from telling it. I am a poor sinful creature. What am I that I should feel ashamed to own my parents? My trials have not checked my pride."

Before her hearer could reply the latch was raised, and crazy Nan herself entered the room. Not perceiving Herbert she had no temptation to display her dress or fancied dignity; and one idea seemed so to occupy her mind, as to leave no room for petty vanities; whilst she spoke with a greater clearness of purpose than she had ever shown before.

"I have seen him, and he has been very kind to me; but we are going away directly, so you must help me pack."

"Whom have you seen?" asked the wondering Kate.

"James, to be sure;—who else would I go with? But you must make haste, for he can't wait—he never could. Come;—come, and pack," urged Crazy Nan, pulling her fretfully by the sleeve.

Katharine ventured a hasty glance at Herbert; she saw pity but no disgust—no ridicule; and ashamed of her own shame, she looked boldly up.

"I will come and pack for you directly;—But you do not want me to go with you?"

"You go with us? No, no, poor child; it would not be fitting for you; you are a lady:—not but what I am one too," she added with a toss of the head. "But I can't stay here answering you, for James is in a great hurry."

As she turned to go into the other room she fronted Herbert, and, in the confusion of her ideas, taking him for Lord Ermiston, began

making him innumerable courtesies, calling him my Lord, and asking him when he would make Kate a lady—promising to be at the wedding.

Poor Katharine felt all the awkwardness of her situation, without the means of avoiding it; but Herbert answered her crazy mother so kindly, so judiciously, that she thought she could never forgive herself for her ingratitude on former occasions.

"You must not keep me talking here. James sent you this, Kate; and you can read it whilst I get my things. I don't want you," she said waving her back after giving her the note, "I don't want you," she repeated, muttering in a low tone as she left the room—"She would ask for some of my clothes; but she can't have them;—she'll have enough of her own soon."

Katharine opened her father's note with anticipations of evil; but they were not realized. He only advised her to go to the

Carters if she had found no other home, promising that she should not be the worse for having nursed her mother as he had bade her.

She was still conversing with her visitor concerning the note, when Nan returned with a dirty bundle in one hand, and an equally dirty bonnet in the other, adorned with a daggled red feather.

"There, Kate, I give you that, for nursing me; and I would not give it any one else," said Nan, trying to place the bonnet on her head, an honor which Katharine declined, drawing quickly back.

"Oh! you want the gown instead; but you can't have it," she exclaimed, holding the bundle tighter, "you will have plenty of gowns soon, when you are a lady; and so shall I. You are a good child, Kate; I always loved you; and you have nursed me very kindly, so you shall be a lady any how. Good bye! Good bye, my Lord," courtesying to Herbert

with mock dignity, adding with a familiar nod as she was closing the door, "I'll be sure to be at the wedding."

"This removes every obstacle to your going to Farnley Lodge," remarked Herbert, who was the first to rouse himelf from the reverie into which both had sunk on the departure of Nan Darrell.

"It does; and I shall be ready and happy to accompany you to-morrow, only fearing—"

"You must fear nothing," he said, interrupting her.

The requisite details were soon arranged, and Herbert rose to take leave, anxious to return to the next town where he had a commission to execute for Mr. Colvin. Katharine accompanied him to the wicket, and both stood some moments looking out on the sunny green, and the merry children all at play. How different were Kate's feelings now to what they had been but one short hour before. The sunshine and the laughter were no longer

I am half tempted to a romp myself.
say you, Miss Darrell?" asked Herbe
amused at the gambols of the hap
dren.

"I am afraid Mrs. Carter would be
though it would not be the first tim
same spot," said Katharine half smili
half sighing, "I was playing here wl
Mrs. Arnold found me. After many
returned, the child become the wo
poor, but not as happy. I cannot
how I hated the freshness of that gre
I shuddered at those merry laugh
seemed as insults to my breaking hear
shall I stand here again? and with w
inga?"

fear of Mrs. Carter, though I would promise not to tell, I must be gone. Adieu till to-morrow; and then sighs and tears shall be left at Cowford;—I will have only smiles. My veracity is staked for your being as you were, not as you are."

Her shake of the head by no means spoke such decided dissent as before—it was doubtful, rather than preremptory; and when he marked how she smiled upon him through her tears, trying in vain to speak her thanks, and met her animated look of gratitude, so changed did she appear from the wan, faded, and despairing being which had at first so shocked him, that he hoped to see her restored to what she had been on their first acquaintance, allowing only for her increase of age.

Some faces owe their beauty and their power to the feelings of the heart, the impulse of the moment; and thus it was with Katharine Darrell. Without her intelligent mind, her warm, and grateful heart to illuminate her

her absence from home, and a neglec
warding the letter. She regretted her
to accompany Kate to Farnley Lod
much evil of Mrs. Dixon, and more
Mr. Eustace, who had taken so much t
find her out, wondering how she co
thought him a wild young man, as
done at Sallowfield;—hoped she w
comfortable with Mrs. Colvin; and tl
various hopes and fears, advice to tak
herself, and be particular as to ha
clothes aired, &c., &c., she made a
excuses for sending a purse of her o
ing, containing a trifle, thinking Mis
might find it useful; and trusting
would not be offended.

Mrs. Arnold with whom her mother had been acquainted in former days, and pressed Katharine to come and see for herself whether she liked Farnley Lodge and its inhabitants. Should they be mutually pleased the terms of her permanent residence could be easily arranged.

How did Katharine reproach herself for her doubts, her despair, and her former ingratitude to Herbert!

CHAPTER VIII.

The present—the actual—were they our all—
Too heavy our burden, too hopeless our thrall,
But heaven that spreadeth o'er all its blue cope,
Hath given us mem'ry,—hath given us hope!
L. E. L.

With the assistance of Mrs. Binks, Katharine's arrangements were soon completed; and early the following morning she quitted Cowford more hopeful, more happy, than she had been for many, many months.

"There is Farnley Lodge," remarked Her-

bert to his companion, as the carriage, which had been sent to meet them, drove through the last gate. "I insist on your thinking it a very cheerful looking place, not sublime; there is a something chilling about the sublime —we admire it, but we do not love it. It is like one of the rich hooped, and brocaded dresses of our grandmothers, very grand, but rather stiff—not fit for every day use. What think you of my lecture on the sublime?—being delivered gratis you are bound to be charitable in your judgment, and must not pronounce it unpoetical. I verily believe you have not heard one word of it, your thoughts being engaged in anticipating the terrors of a presentation to my cousin. Confess and make a humble apology."

"Will you forgive me if I do?"

"I cannot refuse, you ask so prettily; but a second offence will not be so easily pardoned. Here we are arrived."

friend r' ne said as they crossed
ing that she trembled at the
meeting.

" Thank you; but I would r
over. You must think me ver
do not know how few have m
since Mrs. Arnold's death."

" Poor thing !" thought Herb
her fears, and contrasting her
meanour with her manner o
acquaintance; she had not ther
unkindness; and she never exp
had written to prepare his cousin
tion which grief had made in he
and doubted not that her pity w
listed in her favor.

then we will both scold her for thinking you a very terrific personage."

"Not so, Herbert, for how should Miss Darrell have learnt to regard me as terrific, but by your description. I am not at all an appalling person I do assure you, whatever that wicked Herbert may have said," replied his cousin taking both her hands kindly in hers, and then seating herself beside her. "We will be good friends at once, and defy his malice."

"My malice, Mary! I have not a spark in my whole composition—have I Miss Darrell?" asked he gaily, seeing that tears were gathering in her eyes, overcome by the kind manner of Mrs. Colvin, a pleasing looking woman, with the appearance, as well as the reality of delicate health.

"I should be most ungrateful if I did not say—no," replied Katharine, striving to master her emotion.

"Victory! Victory! There Mary! and

Herbert, cried a beautiful g—
years of age, springing into his
clinging round his neck.

"A dutiful and affectionate wife
defend her husband, as all wives sh
should not they Colvin?" said H
dressing that gentleman, who enter
moment.

"To be sure!" he replied with
smile.

"There, Mrs. Colvin! I hope you
the hint," remarked her laughing
turning the caresses of the child; "
I have brought a lady home with
you must learn to love very much.
tell her that you will."

and sulkiness, keeping her face turned away from Katharine.

"Fie, Clara! Why will you not go to Miss Darrell?" asked her mother coaxing, instead of reproving her.

"I won't go to her because she is to teach me my letters—and I won't learn them;—and I won't love her, because she is to be my governess; and I don't like to have one," replied the child, raising her head and speaking with passionate boldness.

"You will think better of it, by and bye, Clara; in the mean time, shall I show you your room, Miss Darrell?" said Mrs. Colvin vexed at this exhibition of Clara's wilfulness; but too indulgent to reprove her, taking Katharine away that she might not be further hurt by the child's rudeness.

After a hasty introduction to Mr. Colvin, Katharine followed his lady, with the painful conviction that her presence was rather sub-

avowed dislike of her darling.

Herbert guessed the truth from l
of returning Mr. Colvin's formal
began to fear that in his zeal to s
might only subject her to fresh
but he had learnt the value of pe
and would not yield without a strug

No sooner had the door closed th
down the child, refusing to take he
though she implored him to do s
round his knees.

"No, Clara, I am not to be c
are naughty, and I will have not
with you till you feel sorry, and say
undutiful, you will not learn you
your kind papa and mamma both

and you promised to behave better; but I see no amendment. Go away, I will have nothing to say to you."

The child drew back with a proud toss of the head, stamping in rage as she exclaimed.

"I hate the nasty lady! I won't have a governess! I'll beat her if she comes near me."

"She will not come near you, depend upon it, whilst you are naughty; I am shocked and grieved to see you in such a passion. Who told you that the lady was to be your governess?"

"Martin; and Martin says that she will make me read in a great book, and not let me run about; but I won't read in a book; and I will run about."

"I hope to hear that you do as your mamma tells you; Miss Darrell is not your governess yet; and no one wishes to prevent your running about. If you choose to remain a dunce, and not learn to read, no one will regret this hereafter so much as yourself."

"I won't learn," replied Clara doggedly her

"You had better send th
mother, Eustace; or leave
shall have a cry presently, an
observed Mr. Colvin.

"So do I; but giving w
passion is not the best meth
of the habit."

Clara began to whimper, as if
father into a stronger interferer

"If you cry, Clara, I tak
nursery on the instant," said
then going with Mr. Colvin int
he asked his permission to m
on this occasion, adding—"y
much I love her."

Mr. Colvin did not refuse, bu

Clara is better than most children; only a little wilful now and then, as all children will be; and I do not see what good a governess will do her, particularly since she has taken such a dislike to her; besides she may interfere between man and wife, governesses are apt to do so."

Herbert coloured, hesitated a moment, and then spoke with his usual frankness.

"I see, Colvin, that you either yielded your consent at first with reluctance, or have repented it since; and will not hold you bound by any previous conversation. Esteeming Miss Darrell as I do, I thought her presence would prove pleasurable to all, considering Mary's health, consequent frequent inability to entertain her guests, or look after Clara; but if you think otherwise the point is settled. She was invited for a month on the footing of a friend, to remain or depart at the end of that time as all might wish; I am sure you will grant her your kindness and hospitality till then, and join with me in endeavouring to procure

"Poor thing!" echoed Mr. Colv
more pity, as she was not to be f
him as a governess, a character
dread. "Poor thing! she shall
till we have found her some situ
depend on our doing all we can t
happy and comfortable."

"I was sure you would say this;
equally sure that you will be mar
kindness, for she is very sensitive,
since her misfortunes, and the m
which they have brought upon her
your bow was cold. I will explain
though it will be rather awkward, s
your manner to banish all her sc
remaining your guest."

hope you have no intention of making her Mrs. Eustace."

"None whatever. I am a rejected lover; and moreover, have no ambition to become the object of a second attachment, particularly having seen all the details of the first. Mrs. Arnold showed me kindness when others scorned me, and accepted my half jesting, half earnest offers of service for herself and her favorite. I do not hold myself called on to repair all Ermiston's errors, heaven forbid! but in this instance I would strive to do so. His conduct to Miss Darrell must have deeply pained her; and not only did it throw her upon my protection, but caused the most violent quarrel in which our cousinly dislike has ever indulged. Though a fear of ridicule prevents his making her his bride, he loves her still, in his way; and was jealous of the interference to which his own moral cowardice compelled me. I am besides much interested in Miss Darrell for her own sake, but have not one

loverlike feeling whilst rendering her a service, though the world, could it hear but half what I have said to you, and Mary, would be sure to anticipate a wedding. I am a refutation of the French Author's assertion that love cannot subside into friendship, and am sometimes surprised at the complete change which her rejection has caused in my feelings. I now only look upon her with the kindly regard of a brother, and have so fully succeeded in convincing her of the absence of every warmer feeling, that she accepts all my attentions in the same spirit in which they are offered. We meet and we part without the slightest embarrassment on either side; and few things would afford me greater pleasure than, as a brother, to give her away at the altar to some one worthy of her."

"I can no longer doubt, you argue the point so very coolly; and I am glad it is, as it is; for though Miss Darrell may be very amiable, her parentage would naturally be an insurmountable obstacle to many. I do not wonder at Lord Ermiston's breaking off the

engagement; and you too ought to look for birth and fortune."

"I hope to make a fortune, and win the power of a choice, without reference to wealth."

"Ay, I know you are a little romantic and independent; but I yet hope to see you the husband of some woman with birth and fortune."

"And I hope to become the husband of some woman of worth and sense; with heart to love me—mind to understand me—and tastes in harmony with mine."

Mr. Colvin, a plain prose man in speech and thought, though his affection for his wife had unconsciously some tinge of the romantic, shook his head with one of those provoking smiles which say—you are young, and will mend of this folly.

How I hate those smiles! I would rather be told in plain language I was a downright idiot, than meet one of those withering, mocking smiles; but I conclude Herbert Eustace had not the same horror of them that I have, for

" Mary and I will be all ki
protegée, but how Clara is t
know not; that maid tells h
than she should, and I am
make Miss Darrell feel uncon
we can coax her into good hu
Mr. Colvin after a little furthe

" Pardon me; my wife mu
to submission, not rebellion; I
see her errors and ask pardo
of her ill humour. Leave her
will say no more rude things

Mr. Colvin shrugged his
another incredulous smile, ob
not bear to hear the child cr

" I hope you will not hear

"You will not get Clara to beg Miss Darrell's pardon to-day, at least."

"We shall see," replied his guest.

When Katharine reentered the room the child was, where she liked best to be, on dear cousin Herbert's knee, one little arm placed round his neck, the other hand holding one of his. There were evident marks that tears had been, but there were no tears then; and the rosy cheek and the laughing eye, were fast recovering their beauty, though a thoughtful look, and an occasional sigh appeared to intimate that her cares had not all departed.

She got off his knee when Katharine was seated, advanced a step towards her; then turned to Herbert, looked pleadingly in his face, and asked him to go with her. He kissed her with an encouraging smile, and holding her hand led her up to Katharine. She hesitated a moment; her little chest heaved, and the tears stood on the long lashes, but cousin Herbert's kind words again gave her courage,

and hope you will forgive me.

There was something so touchi
submission of this beautiful spoilt,
spirited child—a submission eviden
her much, and won by kindness, no
ness, that Katharine, folding the lit
in her arms caressed, and soothed
mising forgiveness and wiping awa
tears, perfectly unconscious that he
falling all the time.

Clara looked up surprised at car
expected;—her shame and terro
putting her arms round Katharine's
whispered, "I'll love you very m
then after a low sob, or two, the
her late emotion, nestled quietly i

sudden desire to look out of the window, and plain prose Mr. Colvin uttered an impatient "Psha!" at finding that he had completely lost the train of the calculation on which he had been employed.

"Don't cry! I love you, and cousin Herbert shall love you; and papa and mamma," said little Clara, generous, affectionate, in spite of all her spoiling and occasional bursts of passion. "Don't cry!" she repeated, kissing Katharine as she spoke.

"I am quite ashamed; I was not aware that I had been so silly," exclaimed poor Katharine, colouring and confused, yet returning the child's caress as it deserved.

"Do not apologize, my dear Miss Darrell, I love you all the better for those tears," said Mrs. Colvin, her mother's heart completely won.

Herbert explained the terms on which Katharine was to remain at Farnley Lodge so kindly, and adroitly, that she felt no scruples which were not speedily overcome by the sudden fondness of Clara, and the kindness of her

parents; and when he took his departure two days after, he left his ward, as he playfully called her, much pleased with her temporary home; and not more anxious for the future than might be excused to one in her situation.

No engagement for Katharine had been found at the end of the month, though Mr. and Mrs. Colvin had at first really exerted themselves to procure one; but she had no hesitation in remaining at Farnley Lodge till further exertions had been used, thus pleasing herself, her host and hostess, and little Clara, by no means an unimportant person.

Herbert ran down to them when he could snatch the time from his professional duties, sure of meeting a welcome; but the increasing number of his briefs—the nursing an invalid friend, and other employments, after some months prevented his visits to the Colvin's being as frequent as he, and they desired.

END OF VOL. II.

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OR, THE

GIPSY MOTHER.

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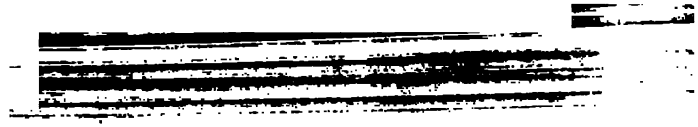


NAN DARRELL;

OR,

THE GIPSY MOTHER.

CHAPTER I.

I dreamt of my lady—I dreamt of her grief—
I dreamt that her lord was a barbarous chief.

" O'Connor's child I was the bud
Of Erin's royal tree of glory;
But woe to those who steep'd in blood
The tissue of my story."

Campbell.

MONTHS on months had elapsed since Katharine's arrival at Farnley Lodge and yet she was still there. How many plans are formed! how few are executed!

" I have news which will please you and Clara," said Mrs. Colvin, who was lying on a

sofa reading a letter, whilst Miss Darrell was piecing out a puzzle for the child's amusement, and Mr. Colvin writing in a distant part of the room, "Herbert will be here to-day; and if we pet him sufficiently he says he may be tempted to remain a fortnight."

"I am so glad! it is an age since he was here, and I long to tell him how very, very happy I am," exclaimed the grateful Katharine, with the open joyousness of younger days.

Mrs. Colvin smiled; read more of the letter, and then observed, but not as gaily as before; "Here is a confused sentence about you, which I can make neither head nor tale of. He seems to have heard that some situation has been offered to your acceptance—expresses doubts as to what your decision should be, yet appears to intimate that it would be prudent to accept it. I never knew him express himself so vaguely; and have no idea what he means!"

Katharine's happy look lost half its brightness.

He must mean old Lady Dumblany's offer," observed Mr. Colvin, rising and reading the confused passage over his wife's shoulder. "I do not know why he should think it prudent to accept it, for her temper is enough to weary any one to death. You cannot go, Katharine, I do not know how we could part with you; we should miss you so very much. Clara never cries now; and you manage the house so admirably, and entertain the visitors so well, that Mary has nothing to worry her; and is better than she has been for years."

"You cannot go, Katharine; we should not know what to do without you now we have felt your worth. You have cured Clara of being wilful without making her stupid or sad; and always seem so happy yourself that it makes others the same only to look at you," echoed Mrs. Colvin.

"You must not go; cousin Herbert shan't

take you away," cried little Clara with tears in her eyes, clinging round her as if to detain her.

"What can I say?" asked Katharine with a faltering voice.

"Why say that you will stay, if you like us," observed Mr. Colvin bluntly.

"Surely you cannot wish to leave us, when we all love you so much; even my matter of fact husband, of whose partiality I am half jealous," added his wife, looking up in his face with a smile to thank him for joining in what he knew to be her wish.

"Don't go, and I'll be so good," pleaded the clinging Clara, concluding with a return of her former wilfulness—"you shan't go."

"Indeed, I have no wish to go—I am so happy here! Do with me as you will—I know not how to thank you for your kindness," faltered Katharine, smiling through her tears.

"You have nothing to thank me for; as Mary says, it makes one happy to look at

you," said Mr. Colvin turning back to his writing, having a perfect horror of anything resembling a scene.

"Dear Katharine is always to stay, and teach me to be good and clever;" exclaimed the delighted Clara, hugging her mother, and then her father, to the detriment of his writing, and at the risk of producing the scene which he dreaded, ending with innumerable caresses to her favorite, and the declaration that she would scold cousin Herbert well for thinking of taking dear Katharine away.

Thus in spite of old Lady Dumblany, and young Mr. Eustace, was Katharine established in perpetuity at Farnley Lodge, at the earnest entreaties of the very three who had once so strongly opposed her continued residence; her strict principles, her fascinating manners, and her sunny temper having, as Herbert had expected, won her the regard of all.

"Where is Miss Darrell?" asked Herbert

romping expedition with Clara, upon her. She is very anxious to

"Anxious to see me! Does consult me?"

"Oh no! that point is settled sulting you, so you need not look and foolish. It was carried nem. gentleman say to puzzle us po women. But bless me, Herbert, and disappointed you look, turnin then red. I am sorry you wish to Lady Dumblany, though wh imagine, she being most assuredly ant of the furies, though I have the genealogical tree. The truth declared at once that we could n

absolute sunshine; even my sober husband was quite sentimental on the subject, and Clara threatens you with a great scolding for wishing to send her dear, dear Katharine to cross, old Lady Dumblany."

"I never wished to send Miss Darrell to Lady Dumblany. What do you mean Mary?"

"Rather what do you mean, Herbert? What else could you intend by that very unintelligible paragraph of yours? No other situation has been heard of, indeed we have long tacitly ceased to look for one, aware that we could ill spare her. I am sure you must be in love, or you would never have written any thing so contradictory and incomprehensible."

"Nonsense! I was hurried;—you forget how much my time is occupied," replied her cousin quickly, as if not pleased with the charge of being in love, or being incompre-

look so conscious," persis
Mr. Colvin asked of his p
ing him on his increasing

" I hear all speak of y
man; so when do you in
cousin? Is it to be the
fused your letter?"

" I am afraid she will r
Herbert with a show of h
his hearers laugh.

" Here comes Katha
Clara is not far off. I do
but I who am so often
have long ceased to say N

" Yes; if I were not
Mr. Colvin, I should be j

lawn at the moment her cheeks glowing with health and exercise, and her eyes dancing with pleasure at the meeting.

"My cousin says you wish to see me, Miss Darrell."

"Yes; to tell you how very, very happy I am; and to thank you for bringing me to Farnley Lodge. And now you are here I can find no words to tell my happiness or gratitude," she answered giving him her hand with unembarrassed frankness.

"I want no words," he replied gazing on her admiringly, with a look that deepened the colour on her cheek, and made her turn away.

He led her to his cousin.

"Now, Mary, did I say too much? Did I exaggerate, when I told of what Miss Darrell had been—what I hoped she would be again? I staked my character for veracity on my description—did I say more than the truth?"

"No, what you said was mere commonplace

matter of fact. Katharine certainly is an embodied sun-beam—the incarnation of happiness, to be as poetical as yourself; and I most humbly beg your pardon for my doubts," replied his laughing cousin, glancing from the blushing Katharine to her husband, whose thoughts did not differ from his wife's more than does prose from poetry.

"After such a frank admission of error, Mrs. Colvin, I shall graciously forgive you. Will you too, Miss Darrell, own that you were wrong, and I was right, when I ventured on a prediction of brighter days, and something like a return of former looks and feelings?"

"Yes, I was wrong and you were right. I was very naughty then—very fretful, and despairing;—now I am happy, and, I hope, humbly grateful. But you all try to spoil me," replied Katharine seating herself on a low cushion by Mrs. Colvin, and affectionately pressing the hand held out to her.

"Strong symptoms of spoiling, indeed; I

see I must take you under my especial care and direction as I did Clara," observed Herbert with a manner that made Katharine look up, and then look down, as she observed:—"You pardoned Mrs. Colvin—was I less frank?"

"You are not afraid of me, Miss Darrell?"

"Will you be merciful?"

"Very merciful! only insisting that you should listen to my lectures, I must keep up my practice, and since I cannot lecture juries, must lecture you."

"Ah me! How shall I escape?"

"There is no escape; I am inexorable."

"Then I must submit; but remember you have only insisted on my listening, not on my obeying."

"Rebellion! and that under the guise of submission! Look you to it, for I will be a very tyrant!"

"You shan't scold Katharine; and you shan't send her away," said Clara, who had

Herbert, joining in t
child's lofty air, draw
he spoke.

"The revolt of the
cousin gaily.

Herbert glanced at
arine, then seating hin
the latter, he placed t
asking what she mean
undutiful wife, as to thw

"Why did you war
away then?"

"You mistake, Clara;

"Oh fie! cousin Herbe
See how red he looks, ma

"Guilty!" cried M-

I had not the slightest wish that Miss Darrell should go to old Lady Dumblany; and am delighted that she has resolved on staying here."

"I believe you now, cousin; but why did you look so red before?"

"Would not any one of my height be red, stooping to such a little wee, wee thing as you?"

"So that is all, dear cousin Herbert!" cried the happy child, kissing him again and again. "I am sorry now that I scolded you."

"Indeed! And you will still condescend to be my wife then?"

"Yes; and dear Katharine shall be your wife too," cried Clara suddenly passing her arm round Kate's neck, so as to draw her close to Herbert. "You will be his wife—won't you?"

"No!" replied Katharine quickly, releasing

herself from the child's hold, and turning away.

"Katharine will have nothing to say to him; she leaves him all to you, Clary," observed her father, laughing at the abrupt and decisive monosyllable.

"Yes; Miss Darrell's 'no,' was sufficiently determined," remarked Herbert, as it seemed in pique.

"No wonder! Pretty proceedings! not contented with one wife, Herbert, in a christian land?" said Mrs. Colvin.

"Remember, it was Clara's proposition, and not mine; I should not have so presumed," replied her cousin rather pointedly; then, changing to sudden gaiety, he carried off Clara for a romp upon the lawn.

"What a long ramble! a whole three hours!" remarked Mrs. Colvin the next day, as Miss Darrell, Herbert, and Clara, came in from the garden. "Has he been inflicting

one of the promised lectures upon you, Katharine?"

"That I have; and I am happy to say I ground great hopes on her patient listening, cousin."

"I am glad to hear it, and suppose her modesty causes her blushes, and prevents her answering for herself. By the bye, dear Katharine, I expect an invalid friend; and must coax you to make fitting arrangements for her comfort. I know no one so delightful to come about one in illness as yourself; you think of every thing—even to fresh flowers, a light tread, and a gentle smile. I do not feel equal to much; and there are hosts of other people coming at the same time, which I am afraid may annoy her; but Lady Yerbury insists on my making no change in my plans, as she cannot remain more than two or three days. I fear that this may be our last meeting upon earth. Poor Caroline! Hers has been a life of suffering, though she makes no complaint.

So beautiful—so gentle—and doomed to be so wedded!"

"I have often wondered how she came to marry such a wretch," observed Herbert Eustace.

"I suspect she had no choice, being too gentle to contend with her stern mother, or her spendthrift father, who were dazzled with Lord Yerbury's wealth. Not that Caroline complains of her parents; but she was certainly more like a corpse than a bride at her wedding, and has never looked happy since. My only surprise is that she has lived so long subject to the unkindness of her lord, who has already fixed upon her successor. Any other woman would have been parted from him years ago; and nothing but her remarkable gentleness and patience, could have enabled her to endure his harsh and insulting conduct;—that very patience has prolonged her life. Poor Caroline! when I think on all her sufferings I am well nigh in a rage."

"What made Lord Yerbury so eager for the match?"

"Her beauty; and as that faded, so faded every semblance of respect—of love, he was not capable."

"She receives little consolation from her mother, I believe."

"None; Lady Mexington is vexed that she will not have two grandsons Earls; yet her son's son gives her little pleasure."

"I hope she will not accompany her daughter; that woman is my aversion. In cold, selfish, calculating ambition she is unequalled; and for pride and haughtiness, when not controlled by interest, I will match her against any. Mrs. Morven is proud, but her's is a noble pride, (if I may be allowed to say any thing so wicked) compared with Lady Mexington's. Mrs. Morven could perform a generous act, in spite of her pride, perhaps from it, though against her own interest, if it did not interfere with her idol, family honor;

generous act, but would a base on
of maintaining secresy; thoug
there has ever been great riva
them. Lady Mexington triumph
Morven during her adversity; i
suspect did two ladies of the sam
each other more sincerely, though
in their speech. In my wicked,
days, it used to be one of my favo
to provoke them to a quarrel; and
at both. I believe Mrs. Morven
me, considering my loss of weal
as sufficient punishment for all
meanours, but Lady Mexington
venge; and woe to me if I fell int
I absolutely shrank from her wrat

not come hither, at least, I have not heard of such being her intention."

Lady Yerbury arrived, and though expecting to see her changed, Mrs. Colvin started back in grief and surprise at the painful alteration.

As schoolfellows they had been much attached, and much together; and though circumstances had parted them in after life, and checked the frankness of Lady Yerbury's nature, each retained much of the affection of their early years.

"Lady Yerbury saw her friend's start, and pressing her hand with a sad smile accounted for her looking worse than usual, by the admission of fatigue. "Do not grieve for me, dear Mary; I am more happy now than I have been since we were little children; perhaps still happier than then. I had wild spirits, and a restless mind, loving, longing for a thousand things—now I have learnt to love my God the first; and have no longing

your feeling heart the story of
dared not speak to you of wha
dared to think upon myself. W
with a grief you could not soothe
speak ill of those to whom my
me? You have a girl, dear Ma
tell me lovely; sell not her hai
or gold—barter not her beauty
not have her death upon your
would not doom her to a life o
But you are kind and gentle—
compel your child to misery."

"Heaven forbid! Poor Caroli
have borne all this! I guessed it
would not speak."

rows die with me—those sorrows have been good for me. I part in peace and charity with all—I have no wish to live, and would not change my lot for all this world can offer. There is rest in the grave—and hope beyond."

Mrs. Colvin was much moved. Her tears fell fast as she looked on this friend of her youth sinking into the grave with a peace, a hope, almost angelic; and then thought of her as she had once been, a gay, and happy schoolgirl; and then the lovely woman, flattered and admired by all who knew her.

The friends wept, hand held in hand; and the gentle admonitions of the dying one, whose heart was weaned from earth by suffering, and by prayer, were not unprofitable to the living.

"I am ashamed of my weakness, and egotism, dear Mary; it is long since I have talked so much of myself; and now I must talk of

happy with such a husband!
child! and so many kind frien
means of doing good to others
ashamed to say I fret sometimes
health, fearing lest I should we
Charles, kind and considerate a
been; and I am afraid I dote
Clara. I will take you for my m
to do better for the future."

"Take a higher model, Mary!
earth!—and oh, not me! Had I
had not suffered as I have. But
more of my poor self. Have yo
dition to your family one with t
of the girl and woman all combin
her praised the other day as yo

no fortune. Happy for her perhaps that she has no wealth to tempt them. What am I to call her?—a companion?"

"I really cannot tell you Katharine's real situation in our household; she calls herself the family pet, and declares that we all spoil her. She is the most grateful and affectionate of human beings—assists and smiles upon every body—manages the house—helps to entertain my company—teaches and plays with Clara—nurses me—and talks sound sense with Charles or amuses him with her gay sallies. She came to stay one month—she has been here many—and we have all decided, that it would be impossible to live without her. I suppose, as, she says, we must invent a new office, and call her 'The pet,' and here she is to answer for herself. Come, Katharine, and let me introduce my old friend, and new favorite to each other."

Lady Yerbury half rose from the sofa on which she was reclining—looked at Katharine

Colvin hastening to render every

Lady Yerbury was too ill to j
in the drawing room for seve
Katharine, at her particular req
much of her time with her as sh
from Mrs. Colvin's other guests,
character which that lady had
proving herself the most tende
of nurses; the most affectionat
of human beings; ready to love
smiled upon her; thankful for e
and no longer painfully sensitiv
inuendoes, which in fact she n
countered; the guests of Farn
usual, modelling their manner o

other in the day can gladden or depress, Lady Yerbury was lying on the sofa in her own quiet dressing room, the beams of the setting sun coming in at the open window, and shedding a gentle glow on the pallid cheek of the patient sufferer, lending it a more than earthly beauty. Katharine gazed upon her for some moments with mingled pity, love, and admiration; then, checking her tears, that had risen at the thought of how soon that weary heart would be at rest, she took her seat on a low chair beside the invalid, asking if she should finish the book which she had been reading to her in the morning.

"No, I thank you, dear child, if you will let me call you so. I would rather hear you talk; there is something in your tone when speaking which touches and yet soothes me, bringing back thoughts of other days—of one long since departed. And your looks too are like his, I felt they were when we first met, and loved you for the likeness."

merry voices, and light in
at the open window from the la

Katharine rose—looked out
and kissed her hand—her
becoming still more glowing, a

Lady Yerbury marked the
heightened colour, and the
away from the window; and
smile struggled for mastery.

"Go, dear girl! go and join
suitable minds and ages. I ha
you too much in a sick chaml
the fancies of a capricious inva

"Not capricious, dear Lady
kind, gentle, and patient; and
when with you!—indeed, I a

which I have for you—a different happiness when I am with you;—it is more like what I used to feel for Mrs. Arnold, my dear, my more than mother. When you thank me so sweetly, calling me your child, I almost think she is before me. I will not leave you now, unless you say that you are tired of me."

"I am not tired of you," replied Lady Yerbury, passing her long thing fingers through her bright curls, parting them from off her open brow, and looking on her for some moments without speaking, whilst a sadder expression came over her placid features; then starting from her reverie, she said:—

"You may stay with me in body, but your heart will be with that gay company. Nay, I did not mean to chide—it is but natural at your age," she added, seeing that Kate bent her head to hide a blush. "There is one in that merry group dear—very dear to you."

"Yes, dear little Clara is there," replied Katharine hurriedly, looking away.

will out.

Katharine was silent.

" You do not—you
you take advice from
better, than our short a
seem to warrant? Do
that truly loves you—le
to coquetry. You car
loving, thinking yourse

" I would trifle wit
bury. I have never pl
have known what it is
—far worse—rejected–

Lady Yerbury was s
ate earnestness of Katl

" Forgive me! I wo

"Thank you, dear Lady Yerbury, I was too indignant at the accusation; but, despising coquetry, as I do, I trust I shall never practise it."

"I trust so too of evil purpose;—but may you not be playing the coquette unconsciously?"

"I am not conscious of being unconsciously a coquette," said Katharine laughing.

"You shall not escape through my blundering questions. Will you assert that you kissed your hand to Clara?"

Katharine's quick glance was withdrawn on the instant, and she busied herself in arranging her sandal as she replied.

"Ask Clara; she will tell you that it was."

"I ask Katharine Darrell—not Clara Colvin."

"Katharine Darrell kisses her hand to a thousand people."

"Katharine Darrell does not kiss her hand

on other things. Is she
or unconsciously playing
ing preference, yet preten
sowing the seeds of sorr
others? You have no ca
attachment;—why deny
conceal it? Why not ad
regard him?"

"He has never asked th
ed Katharine in confusion

"Indeed! Then I m
Colvin. I understood th
told his love to her, but y

"Did he say this to he
quickly.

Lady Yerbury smiled.

May I not? Shall I tell Mary that he may hope."

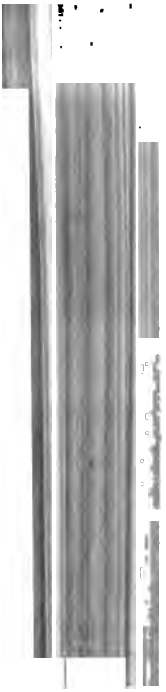
"Why does he not plead to me himself?" asked Katharine rather proudly, striving to master her confusion.

"Is this worthy of you, Katharine? Will you for a poor punctilio throw your happiness away? If Mr. Burnet has not said exactly 'Katharine will you have me,' still he has said too much to leave a doubt of his intentions. Do not play the trifler. Bid me tell him that he may hope," she said laying her hand caressingly on her young favorite's shoulder.

Instead of replying, Katharine rose abruptly, and walked to the window from which she had before looked out.

"You think I have no right to urge you on this point," continued her ladyship, after a time, breaking the awkward silence, "I have no excuse but my regard."

Katharine started at her voice, endeavouring to repress some painful feeling; and then



her.

"I love not Mr. Burnet—wed him! If Mrs. Colvin i presence, I will go—I only st treaty; but if you will think I cannot help it."

Her hearer was amazed.

"Come hither, my proud must lay that evil spirit. M to part with you; and I do n coquette; only a dear, warm ward child."

"Forgive me, dear Lady Katharine, moved to tears words, "I am not wayward; Mr. Burnet; and he knows i

so than wed with one I cannot love. It is not as if I had always been indifferent; I have loved—I was beloved;—and though rejected, scorned, I will be Katharine Darrell till my death, if I feel not as much, or more than I felt then. It is hard to thwart the wishes of my friends; but is it kind in them to press what pains me? Do not you too join against me? Do not condemn me to a living death—a union of the hands and not the hearts?"

"I urge you to the giving of the hand without the heart? the selling of your beauty for fine gold?—Never! If they ask it, do not do it!—if they smile upon you, turn away!—if they flatter, do not listen!—if they threaten, do not yield! Go down into the grave, if Heaven raise you up no friends; but go not to the altar with a falsehood on your lips!"

It was Katharine's turn to be surprised at such a burst of feeling from the usually placid Lady Yerbury, whose strength failed as she concluded. The hectic flush and the unnatu-

ral brightness of the eye faded on the instant, and the speaker sank back on the sofa from which she had half risen pale and exhausted.

Katharine gave her some restoring drops, and the invalid revived.

"I have surprised you by my vehemence—I have surprised myself. I thought I could be calm even on this subject. Alas! we never know ourselves. Deal frankly with me, and I may serve you. Was it not Mr. Burnet to whom you kissed your hand?"

"No;" answered Katharine promptly, though shunning her friend's look.

"May I then ask to whom?"

Katharine was silent, and Lady Yerbury continued without pressing the question.

"There is some riddle to be read. Mary told me that Mr. Burnet's attentions had been marked from your first acquaintance; that you knew his feelings, and she was convinced were not indifferent to him though for some

unknown reason you declined his suit. She spoke of him as young, rich, with none to control him; sensible, generous, and much attached; and, warm in his cause, not only urged me to persuade you, but asked the same of Mr. Eustace."

"Did Mr. Eustace engage to do so?" demanded Katharine quickly.

"No; he refused abruptly, saying that he had neither right nor inclination to influence your decision, and persisted in non-interference though his cousin grew rather warm at what she termed his obstinacy, continuing to point out the advantages of the match in which he readily concurred."

"And what were the advantages in which he so readily concurred?"

"Wealth, a sensible husband, and a happy home."

"And can none but Mr. Burnet ever offer these?" she demanded, stopping abrutly, and looking down.

home must be much to any

" I understand," interrup
she paused to word her m
" I understand you"—the
to her temples as she spoke,
ing, leaving not a tint of col
cheek. " You mean that n
wealth and sense would wed
poor crazy mother; and I fe
And Mr. Eustace readily con
he was right;—and you, a
are both right. I have thou
these things of late, I have l
happy;—but I now see wha
said before, I will not weary l
my presence. I am well now

to weep for her;—she will cause none to mourn—she will let none do a foolish act for her."

"Can this be the Katharine Darrell of the last few days?—my gentle nurse? the petted favorite of all, standing before me now with that blanched cheek, and haughty mien? the blue veins swelling on her brow—the curl of scorn upon her lip?"

"No, Lady Yerbury; I am not the Katharine Darrell of the last few days; I am no more the petted, happy favorite of all;—the gloom of the past is on me;—I am again an outcast—and alone. I would slave, I would perform the drudgery of a menial for Mrs. Colvin, for I love her and am grateful—but wed with Mr. Burnet I cannot—and I will not. Tell her so, if you please—tell Mr. Eustace so; and that I wait in my room to know their wishes."

"Stay, Katharine! you shall not leave me in anger."

"I am not angry; or if so it is with myself. I must ever love Mrs. Colvin, for the past, though she should discard me now."

"She has no wish to discard you. Come back, I entreat; you know I am too feeble to detain or follow you."

Katharine came back, but slowly and reluctantly.

"What more would you have with me?"

"I would have you dismiss that lofty air, which so ill becomes you."

"That lofty air which ill becomes me? It does indeed! What have I to do with pride? a beggar and an outcast."

She seated herself as desired, bending her face on her clasped hands, whilst her deep sobs told her sorrow.

"Dear child, look up, I cannot bear to see you thus. I wished to serve, and I have only pained you. I would calm you, and I cannot calm myself.—You have brought the

past before me, till the feeble frame shudders at its memory."

Katharine looked up—their eyes met; and the next moment the agitated girl was weeping in Lady Yerbury's arms.

"Hush those sobs, if but for my sake. I will not let you go till you promise to love Mary as before, and to believe me when I say that nothing would grieve her, her husband, and her child, so much as your departure."

"Why then urge my union with Mr. Burnet?"

"Solely for your fancied benefit; consoling herself for your loss by your being settled so near that you might meet almost every day. Believe me, I only speak the simple truth; and she would be much vexed if she knew how you had misinterpreted her words."

"But Mr. Eustace—why should he desire?"

"I am not sure that he does desire it," replied Lady Yerbury in answer to her broken

question. "He admitted the prudence of the match, but positively refused to interfere, appearing to think it possible that you might not like Mr. Burnet, though you had been much with him of late."

"He should have said that Mr. Burnet had been much with me," remarked Katharine quickly.

"I am sure he thought so, if he did not say it. And now, Katharine, you must forget my meddling, and be as happy as you were before."

"Can we forget just when and what we would?"

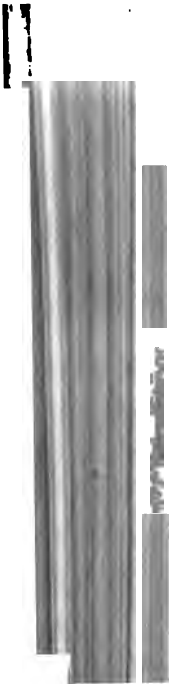
"No! No!" exclaimed Lady Yerbury with unusual vehemence, "years—long years of suffering have elapsed, and yet the past is now before me more clearly than the present. I see him, who has gone down into the grave—I see the husband of my love—a corpse—I meet a mother's wrath. I stand before the

altar—a widow in a bridal robe, vowing to the living that love which rested with the dead."

"Then you will not urge me to this marriage—you will not let others do it," exclaimed Katharine clinging closer to her; though startled at an excitement which she had never seen before.

"Hear me! and then ask the question—hear what no other ear has heard—no other ear must hear. I know not why the hoarded secret of so many years should be revealed to you; but so it is. Strange thoughts have stirred within me from the first moment of our meeting—I could not look upon you as a stranger. You seemed to me as a lost child—the living image of the dead, sent to soothe and bless my parting hours, to hear my woes, and weep them with me. You have recalled the past; and you must hear its history."

She paused some moments, and then continued with passionate eloquence, the resistless



could have so suddenly found s

" Once I was young, and g
ful, they said; and I may say
what was beauty but a fatal
vain look upon my faded form,
the lesson. Lady Caroline H
flattered, fêted, followed, but
that flattered, or that followe
was early told that she must
title—be bartered for fine gold.
not those who followed, she l
followed not—her brother's tut
neither title nor fine gold, th
birth;—had worth, and talent—
Yes, he had honor; and he shun
sister. And then I shunned hir

but a slight accident revealed our feelings;—in the excitement of danger the secret was confessed;—he had shunned me to conceal his own affection; not knowing—not despising mine.

"The hurry, the agitation, of our mutual confession had not subsided, when my mother bade me wed Lord Yerbury. I wept—I implored; but all in vain—she was peremptory;—my father was the like—my brother turned away. Lord Yerbury was an Earl, and rich. Love!—who thought of love but silly and romantic schoolgirls? My lot would be the envy of the multitude.

"I sought Frederick in despair. How could he behold my sufferings unmoved? How feel for, and not endeavour to alleviate them? He knew what Lord Yerbury was in mind, and morals; and that remonstrance, or entreaty would be useless. There was but one way to save me from this wretched fate.

"A visit to an aged relative favored our wishes

—we were married—secretly married by a young friend of his, no one being present but my nurse, who could not resist my pleading. The deed was rash—was sinful:—I seek not to excuse it:—it was my doing—it was the sight of my misery that overcame him. Dearly! how dearly! has it been expiated.

"No one suspected our marriage—no one even guessed our attachment;—we were one, we could not be parted—but we were not happy. The consciousness of wrong and deceit embittered our joy, and the dread of detection before we had arranged for the disclosure, and the fear of the consequences of that disclosure made us tremble.

"The death of Lord Yerbury's mother postponed the preparations for my union with his Lordship; and Frederick was called to the North by the dangerous illness of his father, from whom a second marriage had somewhat estranged him, and compelled him to undertake the office of tutor.

"'Keep up your spirits, dear Caroline, for my sake,' were his parting words, 'I will soon return, and place you in safety: though poor, I am of no mean family; and hope to be reconciled to my father, and induce him to receive you, as you deserve to be received. I trust there are many years of happiness in store for us both.'

"From that day I never knew a happy hour.

"My mother returned from a long visit which she had been paying my married sister:—she spoke of my union with Lord Yerbury at the expiration of his mourning:—I made no reply, but I thought she eyed me keenly and suspiciously.

"My own attendant, the witness of my marriage, who had been much attached to me had unhappily died a short time before; and I was on the point of writing to my husband, who had been long detained by his father's illness, to tell him that the disclosure must soon be made; when I received a letter fixing

an early day for his return, the state of imbecility into which his father had lately fallen, rendering his further attendance useless.

"The day passed—but he came not—my mothers's keen eye was never off me; and a horrible dread came over me. I feared her presence, and yet I feared to be alone. That night I never closed my eyes—in the morning my husband was brought home— a corpse! He had been found at the foot of a precipice close to a dangerous part of the road, and must have been dead some hours.

"Hearing the murmur of many voices, and the trampling of many feet, I rushed out and met his body as they were bringing it into the hall. Springing wildly forward I threw myself on the corpse with a fearful scream of agony.

"When restored to consciousness, I was in my own room, the tortures of the mind and body contending for the mastery—my haughty mother sitting beside my bed, gazing on me

with a stern unpitying look, and giving orders to her own attendant, a harsh old woman, who had never loved me.

"I started up—I asked if Frederick lived? my mother answered sternly "no!" I asked no more.

"In the silence and the darkness of that dreadful night, I became a mother—but alas a childless mother!—They said my infant never even breathed.

"For days I was delirious—none saw me, but my mother, and her maid. I cannot tell how I lived through that, and many following weeks, meeting nothing but stern looks, and harsh and bitter words. I prayed for death, but it would not come; and now I bless my God for further trials, making me fitter by his loving chastening for his holy presence. Strange to say my health grew better week by week, though I asked not to live, and took no care of life, only submitting to my mother's orders; though shuddering at her presence.

"I had not left my room, when I was told to prepare for becoming Lord Yerbury's bride on that day month.

"I pleaded—remonstrated;—spoke of my marriage with the dead.

"My mother scoffed;—she professed to disbelieve my marriage, making my father of the same opinion.

"She did not, or would not appear to credit my assertions; and I had no proofs to adduce. My attendant was dead—the young man who had performed the ceremony gone as a missionary, I knew not whither—the certificate had always been in my husband's possession; and my mother declared had not been found among his papers.

"I knew not how to prove my marriage, and had I known—of what avail? I had no child to whom an honorable birth would be a blessing, and believed myself to be fast sinking into the grave.

"I could never love again—my heart re-

volted at a second marriage—and with such a person—and so soon; but father, mother, brother, all came with their harsh looks, and bitter words, threatening to reveal my shame, and leave me to the mocking of the world. They were blind to my tears—deaf to my pleading—all my entreaties but encreased their anger. I was bowed beneath the outbursting of their wrath; and the widow of five months became again a bride; plighting her faith with a despairing heart to one whom she dreaded and despised. More than twenty years have I now been a wife. How would it shock the young, who look on happiness as theirs of right, could they but know that not one day in all that time would they write down a happy one—and yet there have been many days and months more blessed than youth's tumultuous joy. My pining heart has found a good whereon to rest, and I would not

take one hour of suffering from the many I endured, relying on God's mercy that He chastened but in love;—one hour—one moment less would have been evil, and not good.

"But you who have not brought this suffering on yourself by disobedience and deceit, give not your hand without your heart. You have no parents to command;—yield not to worldly policy—yield not to persuasion;—labour—slave—do any thing but link yourself with one you cannot love—vow not a faith you cannot keep—bring not upon yourself the daily misery of striving to fulfil a painful duty, forcing yourself to try to love. The heart will not be forced; it may be wooed—it cannot be compelled. Wed not if you do not love; and still less if you love another, though you may never meet the one you love again;—though he should rest among the dead. If friends—if poverty should tempt you, think of

Lady Yerbury, and promise me you will not yield."

"I will not yield! I promise this!"

"If you please, my Lady, Lady Mexington is come, hearing that you had been ill, and wishes to know if you can see her directly," said Lady Yerbury's maid, entering at the moment.

Lady Yerbury sank back with a shudder, whilst a deadly paleness succeeded the glow of excitement. She had just revealed her mother's selfish cruelty—had told how she had condemned her to years of misery;—it seemed as though that mother had come to reproach her.

"Shall I tell Lady Mexington that your Ladyship will see her presently?" asked the maid, who, having lived many years with her mistress, had seen too much of the haughty Countess not to guess that her presence could be dispensed with.

"Yes do, Hill; say I am faint now, but will see her presently," replied the invalid with her usual languid gentleness, a striking contrast to her late passionate earnestness.

"Go now, dear Katharine," she said kissing her cheek after some moments' silence, "I know I may rely on your discretion; and you will heed my warning. I know not that I should have told my tale; but you are so like him I loved and lost that I could not look upon you as a stranger; and telling you seemed telling him the story of my sufferings; I have scarcely been so moved since I first knelt beside his grave, and where they laid my little one. Had she but lived, and been like you; I had forgotten half my woe. Yet I would murmur not—God's will be done! Now leave me; I would be alone a little while, to calm my ruffled spirit before I see my mother."

"I wish you would go and try to entertain Lady Mexington," said Mrs. Colvin meeting Katharine on the stairs. "She is in an awful mood; vexed that Caroline cannot see her immediately. I have been playing civil to no purpose; the only thing in which she finds amusement is in annoying Herbert. Will Caroline receive her now?"

"Not till her bell rings. I left her faint, and she requires some minutes to recover."

"Then do pray go down to the Countess, and try to charm her into good humour. Charles will introduce you; and I suspect run away the succeeding minute."

Mr. Colvin acted as his wife had predicted, but Katharine's endeavours to charm the Countess were of no avail; nor was Katharine surprised at this, aware that her own manner was influenced by the history which she had heard. She could scarcely suppress a shudder as she entered her presence, and

her ladyship's sudden start, and piercing look, proving that she too had remarked the likeness to her son's tutor, was not calculated to reassure her. Her own manner was in consequence constrained; and her dread and dislike apparent under the veil of politeness.

This did not escape the keen observation of the Countess; and the haughtiness with which she answered Katharine's endeavours to entertain her, after the delivery of Lady Yerbury's message, proved her little grateful for her attempts, and less inclined to encourage them.

"What did you say was that young woman's name?" she enquired of Mrs. Colvin, as that lady showed her the way to her daughter's room.

"Katharine Darrell."

"What the impostor, whom Lord Ermiston would have married, had not her crazy mother claimed her so inopportunely?"

"Miss Darrell is no impostor, Lady Mex-

has mind and manners fitting her
ion. Her mother was supposed to
long dead, and Katharine herself
Lord Ermiston from his engage-

u have a warm heart, Mrs. Colvin, and
no one of deceit, past or present. I
the girl may not prove ungrateful for
excessive kindness, but even the best
most humble of the lower orders
n never bear a translation to higher
onors."

Before Mrs. Colvin could rally in defence of her young favorite, the speaker, with a sneer upon her lip, had passed into her daughter's room. Their interview was brief, for Lady Mexington could not but see that the only chance of her daughter's being able to travel on the morrow, as she wished, would be the avoidance of any thing that could agitate her. Lady Mexington soon

sought her own apartment, pleading fatigue; and those whom she left in the drawing room talked more freely when she had quitted it.

CHAPTER II.

Some by their words their thoughts reveal ;
And some use speech, but to conceal.

An adieu should in utterance die,
Or, if written, but faintly appear ;
Only heard through the breath of a sigh,
Only read through the blot of a tear.

WHAT a contrast was the Lady Yerbury of the morning, to the Lady Yerbury of the previous night! She was calm, patient, gentle, as those who knew her said she had been for years; no trace of the passionate energy, the strong emotion of the preceding

evening—no allusion to her tale of woe, save when taking leave of Katharine, for whom she sent to her own apartment, excusing herself from joining the party in the breakfast room.

"We have met for the last time; but I would have you think of me sometimes, not in sorrow, scarce in pity; but in love. Take this, dear child, and wear it for my sake," said the Countess throwing over her neck the chain of an elegant watch. "No thanks! I owe you more, far more for your kind nursing. Do not forget my warning, let who will seek to rule; and if you hesitate—then think of Lady Yerbury. Heaven bless you!"

She embraced the weeping Katharine, drew down her veil, and taking Mrs. Colvin's arm, who came in at the moment, descended the stairs, and entered the carriage, which was waiting, accompanied by her maid. Lady Mexington made her adieux a few moments after, and though she had exerted herself to be condescending and agreeable during breakfast,

the general feeling was pleasure at her departure.

"Do you intend to appropriate Lady Mexington, and her jointure, Eustace, that you handed her to her carriage?" asked a young man of the party. "I was amazed at seeing you doing the polite and pretty, after her endeavours last night to annoy you."

"That was the very reason. It was a little piece of playful spite, a relapse into the mischievous mood of my younger, and more prosperous days. I know she detests me; and would as soon walk arm in arm with a bear, though of course she could not decline my politeness; and I made a point of lauding her motherly love, and attention to Lady Yerbury, when all the world knows that she sacrificed her daughter to her own ambition, and the gambling debts of her Lord; and has rarely gone near her till lately, now showing a feverish anxiety lest she should hold communion

with her real friends, and perhaps tell more than her haughty ladyship would like revealed, though none know what that more is. She tried to receive my praises with a good grace, but I have the gratifying certainty that she will not recover her equanimity for some time to come."

"Take care, Herbert, how you provoke her hatred," said Mrs. Colvin.

"I am not afraid; and my not deserving her hatred would by no means save me from it; witness her conduct to Miss Darrell. I will answer for it that a hatred grew up in Lady Mexington's heart on their first meeting, as speedy and lofty as the thistles in the Pampas of South America. Had Miss Darrell been the ghost of a buried crime, her amiable ladyship could not have exhibited more surprise, and hate. Beware, Miss Darrell, how you fall into her power;—remember I have warned you."

"And to some purpose too;—you have made Katharine as pale as the ghost of which you spoke."

Katharine endeavoured to laugh off the accusation, but she felt its correctness—the cruel treatment of Lady Yerbury came to her mind; and most truly did she rejoice that she was neither kith nor kin of the dreaded Countess.

"So I am really to assure poor Mr. Burnet that his hope is hopeless," said Mrs. Colvin to Katharine, when no one else was present but Herbert Eustace.

"Yes, if you please."

"And I am not to blame, and never again to urge you to a prudent marriage Caroline says; and all for her sake. Must it be thus?"

"Yes it must, dear Mrs. Colvin."

Mrs. Colvin shook her head.

"You are a simple, silly girl. Had I a sister Mr. Burnet should have her; but you

refuse to make a prudent match. I wish you would consider."

"Stop! Stop! you are not to blame, not to urge me," interposed Katharine between smiles and tears; jest and earnest. "When you grow weary of me, turn me out of the house; for I am so very happy that I shall not go willingly."

"You are a saucy girl, presuming on the knowledge that we cannot do without you. I doubt if I am sorry after all at your decision, though I thought it proper to talk prudence. Clara would be a dunce if you went, though such a little distance, and I should be worried to death, as I used to be. You need not smile in triumph at this admission, Miss Darrell, it is very silly of you; and I am ashamed at your supineness, Herbert; you who profess to be her guardian should give her a lecture."

"With the greatest pleasure; but I never lecture in the presence of a third person;—so

will you take your departure, cousin mine, or must I request the honor of Miss Darrell's company in another room?"

"Your impertinence is great, Mr. Eustace; however, to leave you no excuse for not doing your duty, I will take my departure."

"So will I," said Katharine springing to the door.

"Not so, young lady," replied Herbert detaining her, whilst he suffered Mrs. Colvin to depart.

"I will be very good—only spare me this once!" said Kate holding up her hands in playful entreaty, but without meeting his eye.

"Are you so much alarmed? Have my former lectures been so very disagreeable?"

Her colour deepened; her hands, no longer raised in playful entreaty, placed and unplaced the chain which had been thrown round her neck that morning. There was a

something too earnest in his manner for mere jest.

The door was thrown open at the instant and the name of a lady in the neighbourhood was announced, and in succession, Mrs. and the Misses Banham.

Herbert and Katharine started. The former, accustomed to *contre-tems*, recovered himself on the instant, but the latter exhibited an unusual embarrassment, though, finding it impossible to avoid a meeting, she came forward to receive Mrs. Colvin's guests. Mrs. Pennant, one of the least amiable of their neighbours, shook hands with Katharine, as a matter of course, (all the neighbours did so) saying that she had brought Mrs. Banham and her daughters to call on Mrs. Colvin, whose acquaintance they had long wished to make.

Mrs. Banham shook hands with Katharine and enquired after her health, rather to her

surprise; and the young ladies did the same, but without any show of the affection of former days. Kate felt as they intended, the difference between Mrs. Arnold's probable heiress, and Mrs. Colvin's poor companion. As she had not expected even this scanty kindness she felt no disappointment at the absence of greater warmth; her own increased knowledge of the world, and Herbert's remarks having long since shown her the Banhams as they really were; but she was annoyed at the meeting; —it awoke melancholly recollections, and perhaps, with a woman's caprice, she had a desire to hear that lecture against which she had a moment before protested. There really is no accounting for the changes of a woman's mind! We give up the attempt in despair.

Mr. Eustace paid his *dévoirs* to all the ladies with equal ease, and indifference, assisting Katharine to keep the whole party in conversation, till Mrs. Colvin appeared, when Mrs. Pennant engaged him to show the grounds to the

young ladies, with a *maladroit* eagerness, which caused the quiet smile with which he had hitherto listened to Miss Charlotte's sallies to border on a laugh. After exchanging a glance with Katharine, whom Mrs. Pennant detained to show her a new stitch in carpet work, he led the way across the lawn, the young ladies practising all their fascinations, whilst Mrs. Banham expressed her great delight in having at length effected an introduction to Mrs. Colvin and her charming little girl, whom she lauded to the skies.

"How very kind of you, Mrs. Colvin, to afford your protection to that poor girl," glancing at Katharine. "My heart bled for her, when I found my old friend had left her quite unprovided for, after bringing her up with such extravagant notions. It is not every one who would receive her, poor thing, considering what her father and mother are; the one crazy, or pretending to be so; the other suspected of burglary, if nothing worse.

To be sure she may not have been told of his plans—we will hope she was not; and you have no son to be won by her charms. Your cousin Mr. Eustace knows her history; and is too prudent to be taken in."

"Yes, Herbert is not to be taken in by any one," replied Mrs. Colvin with a mischievous smile, adding more seriously; "we are all so fond of Miss Darrell, respecting her for her high principles, and loving her for her sweet temper, that we consider ourselves the persons obliged by her residence at FarnleyLodge."

"Indeed! I am glad to hear so good an account of her, for my old friend's sake, as well as her own; I was sadly afraid, brought up with such extravagant notions, that she might turn out idle and presuming."

"You need be under no alarm on that account, Mrs. Banham; the most malicious could not accuse her of indolence or presumption."

"I am delighted to hear it. I was afraid

from some reports which have reached me that the poor girl might be thinking of making a match infinitely above her station," replied Mrs. Banham raising her voice, unintentionally of course, so that her remark was not only heard by Katharine, who had not quite concluded her lesson in carpet work, but also by Herbert, who was just entering the room with the ladies whom he had escorted. "Now this could only subject her to disappointment, as in the case of Lord Ermiston. However she may have been brought up, and however great her attractions, no man of prudence and high honor would seek her hand, if once acquainted with her parentage. The mother's malady alone, setting aside the father's character, must be an insuperable bar to such a union."

"Katharine has no idea," began Mrs. Colvin, a little annoyed at these remarks.

"Hush!" interrupted Mrs. Banham with kind anxiety; "she has finished teaching Mrs. Pennant, and may hear us."

Katharine had heard them, and rose to conceal her deepened colour. An exclamation from Miss Clara Banham caused her to turn towards her party—Herbert's eye was on her, and she saw, or fancied she saw contempt and disgust in his look. The cheek paled as she turned away.

A servant entered with a letter for Mr. Eustace. He tore it open, more as it seemed from the hurry of previous excitement, than from real anxiety to learn its contents, which were by no means pleasing. It contained a summons from an old gentleman, a friend of his father's, supposed to be dying, to go and make his will, and arrange his affairs, according to a former promise.

Taking a hurried leave of Mrs. Banham and her daughters he left the room to prepare for his sudden journey; and the visitors departed, saying a thousand flattering things to Mrs. Colvin, and the little Clara, and congratu-

lating Katharine on having found so kind a friend.

"It is very provoking your being called away just now, we see so little of you;—but you will come back here, will you not?" asked his cousin on Herbert's returning to the drawing room equipped for travelling.

"I don't know."

"A brief and instructive answer that—you are annoyed, Herbert, I can see. Did the Misses Banham weary you? Or are you thinking?

> "How happy could I be with either,
> Were t'other dear charmer away."

Suppose you toss up."

"Hang the Banhams!" exclaimed Herbert pettishly.

"For shame, Herbert! You amaze me! Hang three ladies! such kind, and generous—gentle creatures; and who are all so fond of you!"

"Fond of me!" he repeated scornfully. "The Indian's fondness for the Bishop of Quebec, 'Me like him so much, me eat him.'"

Mrs. Colvin laughed.

"Fie upon you, Herbert, when they came on purpose to see you, though their avowed reason was an introduction to me."

"I do not doubt it;—they came to see how the land lay. My cousin the heir, besides having chosen a wife without consulting them, certainly no prudent choice, is in such a precarious state of health that I may die a Baronet yet; to say nothing of my being what is called a rising young man. Then Mr. Burnet, one of the best matches in the county, is staying at Farnley Lodge; so they tried to enact the old proverb of killing two birds with one stone. I introduced them to Burnet, hoping in gratitude that they would cease to molest me; but there is no gratitude in woman."

"No gratitude in woman? Shame upon you Herbert! What a cynic you are to-day. Here comes Charles; he shall join me in a defence of my sex."

"Two to one? then I'm off," exclaimed her cousin, crossing the room to Katharine, whilst Mr. Colvin related some news which he had just heard to his wife.

"I conclude it would be useless, Miss Darrell, to seek to know your thoughts. Were I to pour into your lap the riches of Geniston you would still be silent."

Katharine turned towards him for an instant in surprise at his bitter tone, and he saw that tears were in her eyes; yet she tried to answer him with playful gaiety.

"Pour them in and try," holding up her apron; "and let me prove that a woman can be silent, though tempted with the treasures of the Genii."

"Your silence would prove something more —it would establish the assertion, which so

enraged my cousin, that there is no gratitude in womam."

"Surely Mr. Eustace, you cannot think me ungrateful!"

She spoke from a sudden impulse, thus individualising the remark which it would have been less embarrassing to consider in a general view; and would have recalled her words when too late.

"I did not say so—did I? I would not willingly believe it."

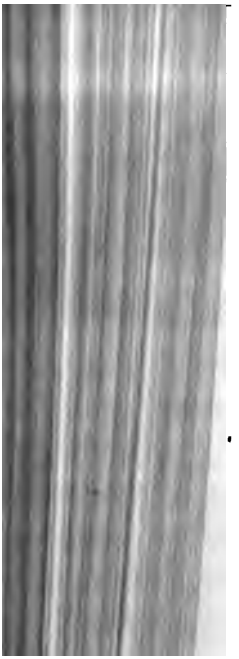
"Then do not believe it. Task my gratitude if you will—it shall not fail."

"Do you speak the truth?" he asked with eagerness, his keen eye on her, as if he would look her through.

"I do," she answered rather proudly.

"Tell me your thoughts then for the last half hour."

She drew back in confusion;—she tried



" I have put you
and you have failed.
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He spoke with a n
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" I am not ung
so."

" You were sile
reply.

" Was it kind—wa
what my thoughts ha
they be but shame and
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will not. I cannot mix

my mother's malady into her family, and rob, as my father is said to have done. I will go —go far away;—I will bring evil upon none. I may be indolent—presuming;—but I am not ungrateful."

"Can you forgive my cruelty?" asked Herbert earnestly, self condemned by her appeal, and the tears which she could no longer repress. "It was neither kind, nor generous—it was cruel and unmanly to urge you as I did. Can you forgive me? Can you forget my harshness?—Will you not pardon me before I go?"

"It is not for me to retain anger against any one—against Mr. Eustace I cannot feel it;—he has my gratitude!"

The hand that he had taken trembled in his grasp as he pleaded for more than forgiveness.

"Forget what that selfish, and manœuvring woman said for her own pleasure only.

My cousin loves you—we all love you;—we cannot—will not part with you, I no longer doubt your gratitude, but I ask for more. I would have you regret my absence—wish for my return. Do not say that I ask too much."

"Come, Eustace! you must hasten your *adieux;* I am waiting to drive you to the village. Be quick, or the coach will have passed," cried Mr. Colvin, who had a great objection, as most plain, matter of fact men have, to being kept waiting; and what might be called a practical horror of being too late. His wife always averred that, but for her delay, they would have been in church on the wedding day before the canonical hour.

"Do you get in, Colvin, I shall be ready as soon as you have taken the reins," replied Herbert, resuming on the instant his discourse with Katharine.

"You are silent! Will you not regret me? I ask but one little word. Do not send me

away without it, or I shall think I am not forgiven? Will you regret my absence?"

"Yes."

He did not quarrel with the low, faltering tone; but only presumed the more.

"Will you welcome my return with—"

"Come along, Eustace; I shall not let you go till you are safe in the coach," exclaimed Mr. Colvin, laying hold of his arm, and dragging him away.

"Stay one moment!"

"Not an instant—I must breathe the horses as it is."

"You can finish your lecture to your ward when next you come; I dare say she will rejoice to be spared for the present," said his laughing cousin.

"I flatter myself that Miss Darrell is not rejoiced at the breaking off of our discourse, which I hope to resume ere long."

"Poor Katharine!" said Mrs. Colvin.

"No leave taking, Eustace," cried her husband, dragging Herbert away, who though provoked at his impatience, could not help smiling at its display.

"Farewell ladies! Mourn my absence! rejoice in my return! this wretch Colvin, will not permit me a more sentimental parting."

"I should think not—that is nonsense enough for a whole room full."

"And you really have no idea when you come back?" asked his cousin as the door was closing after him.

"The first moment that I can command," was his reply, looking back as he spoke.

His words were addressed to Mrs. Colvin; but his eye sought Katharine.

Within the week came an account of Lady Yerbury's death, her closing hour as peaceful as had been her life for many months;—and in a few days followed a letter and some jewels as me-

morials of her regard for Mrs. Colvin, directed to be delivered after her death; and a small packet for Katharine, containing a fifty pound note, a brooch with her hair, and some lines full of affectionate gentle warning.

Her fate was wept by both, though Katharine alone knew how sad that fate had been; yet each felt that to regret her death was to regret her release from suffering.

Letters also arrived from Herbert Eustace accounting for his protracted absence, which if they contained no enclosure for Katharine, conveyed messages, which seemed to imply that he had set his heart on not being forgotten. Yet weeks, months elapsed; and he did not return, notwithstanding his professed anxiety.

The old gentleman to whom his father had been under great obligations, could not bear that he should leave him; and as only one hundred pounds was left to himself, delicacy detained him longer than might a more splen-

did legacy. Then came professional engagements, which must be fulfilled; and after that the relapse of the friend whom he had before so sedulously attended; and whom he could not quit till pronounced out of danger.

CHAPTER III.

"News, masters, News! great news, and grand news!"

Shakspeare.

"COUSIN Herbert is come, and wants you in the library," cried Clara bursting into Katharine's room, who started up at the intelligence, and then sat down again, blushing and confused. "You must come this moment, Cousin Herbert says he must see you directly,

quite alone," continued Clara taking Katharine's hand, and pulling her towards the door. "Are you not very glad that Cousin Herbert is come?" looking up in her face.

"Yes—no."

"Don't you love cousin Herbert then?" asked the child in surprise. "How strange you look."

"You startled me bursting into my room so suddenly. Run, and tell Mr. Eustace that I am coming."

Away ran Clara, leaving Katharine to recover her composure, discomfitted by the sudden announcement that Cousin Herbert must see her directly—and alone. What could he have to say to her?

No sincere person could have praised the ease with which she entered the room; in fact, her *entré* was rather awkward, and she felt that it was, which increased her embarrassment, whilst her greeting of her visitor was less frank and warm than formerly. Nor

was his manner unembarrassed, or in harmony with their parting; it was not exactly cold—but studied; friendly—yet guarded, almost formal;—loverlike it was not—loverlike it seemed as if it never had been—never could be.

Katharine regained her composure;—or its semblance—after the usual questions and replies.

There was a short pause, and then Herbert Eustace spoke rapidly, but not with the clearness which generally distinguished his conversation; occasionally using words that he wished unused the succeeding moment.

"You must have been surprised, Miss Darrell, at my requesting an instant, and private interview, I should not have so presumed on any other occasion; but I thought after hearing what I have to say that you might wish a temporary concealment."

"I do not understand you, Mr. Eustace,"

"I beg your pardo
you might wish to co
change of name."

"Your words are less
stood; I have no inte
name."

"You think so now,
heard what I have to say

"I shall probably pe
tention," interrupted Ka

Herbert coloured, and
his powers; but he wo
clever diplomatist.

"I am most unfortuna
clearly I endeavour to exp

"What of him?" asked Katharine turning pale. "He promised to molest me no more;—he said he wished me nothing but good."

"He means you no harm. In the words of poor crazy Nan, and in fulfilment of her prophecy, he wishes to make you a lady."

"To make me a lady? I beg your pardon, Mr. Eustace, but your manner—that is your words, are so very extraordinary that I must request an explanation."

"Certainly; I am sorry my words and manner have been so extraordinary, and incomprehensible. I mean to say that Darrell has done his utmost to promote your good; and you must permit me to be the first to congratulate you on the prospect of becoming Lady Ermiston."

If Katharine had turned pale at the mention of her father, she looked paler still at the mention of her former lover; she gasped for breath, and then, aware that Herbert's eye

Eustace; but you shoul
would not submit to b
of any man; much less
rejected my hand, but
ance. I know not wha
done to induce Lord Er
prudent resolution; but
been, it was without my
my wishes. If you wi
explain this to his lord
both from vexation."

With a slight inclina
rose to leave the room,
forward to detain her.

"You have completel
I did not—I could no

allowed him to lead her back to her seat, and make another attempt to explain what he had come purposely to reveal; and a most extraordinary revelation it was.

Having taken his invalid friend to a milder air in the West of England, and nursed him into tolerable health, Herbert had fixed the following day for his departure, intending to surprise the inhabitants of Farnley Lodge by his sudden presence; but as he was taking his last walk among the rocks, a paper was put into his hands by a ragged little boy, containing an earnest request from Darrell that he would follow the bearer as he had something to communicate of the utmost importance to Katharine.

He found Darrell in a wretched hut, and in a still more wretched state; worn almost to a skeleton with want and suffering, and obliged from penury and prudence to submit to a deficiency of proper food and medical attendance. After leaving Cowford, pursuing his former

courses, he had been committed on suspicion of having taken part in a robbery; and, in escaping from prison received serious injury, owing to the breaking of the rope by which he was descending the outer wall. Less known in that neighbourhood than in any other part of England, and committed under another name, he hoped in the poor and solitary hut which he had selected as his lodging (the abode of an associate) to avoid detection, but if the officers of justice did not find him out, his own sins did; and he was fast sinking into the grave, puzzled how to perform his promise to Katharine, when accidentally hearing of Herbert's being in the neighbourhood he sent to request his presence, for the purpose of revealing the secret which he had so long kept, and thus securing his revenge on Lord Ermiston.

"Listen to me, sir," began Darrell on his entrance, "mind the words of the dying, and right the orphan, or the curse of the dead

shall rest upon you, as it does on me. I made an orphan—and then wronged her. Do not interrupt me, I have not long to live; and my thoughts begin to wander. You know me only as James Darrell; but my real name is Dennis. My father was steward to Lord Mexington, and I should have succeeded him, but such as the son is, such was the father—he was dismissed for dishonesty; and he, and his family forbidden to put foot on the estate. It was Lady Mexington's doing, and her haughty manner made the dismissal more galling. I shall never forget her scorn!—I swore revenge—I have had some—and will have more. I had received a good education for my station, and tried to turn it to account—but no one would employ me—my father's dismission for dishonesty stood in my way, and Lady Mexington's denunciation of the whole family completed our ruin. One cannot starve, and if the world will not let one live honestly—one must live dishonestly; and

I say the world is to blame. I joined with those who enter gentlemen's houses at their pleasure, and take thence what pleases them. Men call us burglars, and condemn us to be hanged; but they must catch us first. I determined that the plate at Mexington Hall should repay some of the evil done by its mistress's tongue to me, and mine; and a night for our visit was fixed on between me and some more of the gang. My former knowledge of the house came into play, I was to enter before the doors were closed for the night, and when all others were asleep admit my friends.

"In my way thither, the day before, I met the tutor returning from the North.—Accident made me acquainted with the fact of his having a large sum of money about his person. Unable to procure a chaise, he took a horse, which I knew to be restive, from the last stage; and in his impatience chose a short cut. I saw him coming towards the narrow

pass in the road, where I was standing, a bank above—a precipice below the path. I thought of his gold and resolved to possess it. Concealing myself in a brake on the bank above, I struck his horse with stones just as he reached the narrow shelving path. The animal reared, kicked, and plunged over the edge of the precipice, as I had expected. I crept down the rocks, till I reached my victim;—he was quite dead, though the body was little crushed;—he could have suffered little, for I heard no groan.

"It was the first time I had taken life—I was a murderer! and I shuddered at the thought;—but there was no blood on my hands—I had had no struggle—I had struck no blow—I had only flung a stone—and that could scarcely be called murder.

"I took from the body the greater part of his money, and some papers, leaving his watch to avoid suspicion:—and suspicion was

avoided, for all believed his death to be accidental.

"The papers put me in possession of a secret; the deceased had been secretly married to Lady Caroline Eltringham some months before. I always take papers when they come in my way, as I may thus light upon something from the concealment, or publicity of which I may compel a loan or a gift. The marriage certificate might be worth something.

"I succeeded in entering the Earl of Mexington's house on the following day, and concealing myself unperceived; but the bustle caused by the finding and bringing home the tutor's body, with Lady Caroline's alarming illness, which I learnt from the exclamations of those passing near my hiding place, made me think it more prudent to delay the robbery, and I was creeping out to stop my confederates, when steps coming my way, again forced me to conceal myself.

"Turning in at an open door, I hid myself in a cupboard; but it so happened that those from whom I was hiding came into the same room. They were Lady Mexington and her old nurse, as good for nothing an old hag as ever lived. By the help of the tutor's papers I understood that the new born infant, which the nurse held in her arms, was Lady Caroline's; and that if not absolutely dead, as they hoped and believed, it would stand no chance of having its life prolonged through their exertions. The grand question seemed to be how to dispose of the body. The plan which they proposed for this purpose would have prevented my leaving the house unseen, and made the discovery of my accomplices more than probable, so I thought it safest to step from my hiding place, and offer to take charge of the child, and keep the secret if handsomely rewarded. I knew too much for Lady Mexington to refuse my terms, and dare me to put in practice my threat of disclosure, or even to

question me as to the cause of my presence, so the money and the child were given me, but given reluctantly, in spite of my promised secrecy; and I laughed to think that the haughty Countess, who had blighted all my hopes in life, not only felt my power, but dreaded it. She knew me, and she understood my triumph;—but she had no alternative. Lady Caroline was to be given to Lord Yerbury to pay her father's gambling debt, and please her mother's ambition;—of course not a word must be said of the child. I did not tell her that I had proof of her daughter's marriage; thinking that I could frighten her out of more money by keeping silence on this point.

"The old nurse assured her ladyship that the child was dead—she spoke as she wished—that child is living now.

"Some time before, I had married Ann,—Crazy Nan as they call her now, poor thing! She was not crazy then, but as gentle, and

pretty a girl as one would wish to see, though she was of the wild gipsy breed, and somewhat over fond of dress. She was obedient and loving, and not ignorant; being so pretty some lady had taken a fancy to her, and taught her many things above her birth; and she had nice manners then—it was I who drove her mad; and yet the poor wild creature dotes upon me still. Well!—that matters to no one but myself.

"I told the men that we could not rob Mexington that night; and then took the baby to Ann, and her mother, telling them to do the best they could to make it live; and so they did; and my wife soon loved it nearly as well as one which she had just lost. She had it christened Katharine—and it passed for ours.

"We robbed Mexington months after; but either the Countess did not guess why I was in the house that night, or did not dare to name the circumstance; and no one else sus-

pected me. But I was not always to be so fortunate, and being tried for a robbery, I was sentenced to fourteen years transportation.

"I would have threatened Lady Mexington into an interference in my behalf, but she was abroad at the time, and my trial followed too closely on my committal to leave me time to send to Italy, could I have found the means; so I was compelled to submit. I might hereafter return to England, and the child and the certificate played against each other, as might best suit my plans, would ensure me a competence at least.

"I comforted Ann as well as I could, bidding her take great care of the papers, and the child. Poor girl! she did the best she could, but my going, and her anxiety before the trial made her the poor crazy creature you have seen her.

"I was tried under my real name of Dennis, though I had long been known among

my associates as Darrell; and I desired Nan to say that her husband was dead. Strange that in all her crazy fancies she still maintained my death to others, though she wandered over the country under the idea that she should find me out; and this is why she would never have a settled home, leaving the child at Cowford, though very fond of her, because she was too weak to tramp the land with her. Nor did she break my strict injunctions to keep Katharine's real birth concealed, though her love of dress and title caused her strange rambling talk about being a lady, and making the child one; and it is probable induced her to part with her so readily to Mrs. Arnold, for on my return she told me triumphantly 'that little Kate was just like a lady!—looked and talked like a lady!—and that it was all her doing!'

"On reaching England after the expiration of my sentence, I found the young, smart, pretty wife I had left behind, a dirty crazy

old woman; changed in all things, but her love for me, yet never aware that she was not as smart, and as pretty, as when we had parted. She knew soon enough that I was changed, for her nonsense was ever in my way; and sometimes I was a brute. I have done wrong enough in my time; but now that I am dying this seems to me the worst wrong of all;—and to die without seeing her, and saying I am sorry!—Well! it can't be helped. But you will be kind to her, Mr. Eustace, and little Kate, as she used to call her, she will be kind too—I am sure she will. She seldom knew of my wicked plans; and tried to dissuade me when she did.

"I was very angry on finding that Mrs. Arnold had not left Katharine a penny, as I had kept out of sight not to prevent her marriage (which Nan's folly once thwarted) thinking to share her riches as her father. I am sure there has been some false play by that Millar, mean wretch as he is. It can't

matter to me one burglary more or less, I have done too many in my time to be squeamish, so I may as well own that I and my friends robbed Beechen Cliff, the butler kindly leaving a door open at our request. I was too skilful to wake poor Kate, who had like to have been hanged for an accomplice, having been seen with me the day before. I had not intended to speak to her then, but Nan was with her, and, I fancied, telling her who she was; so I thought it best to convince her that I was her father.

"I went to Lady Mexington and demanded money—she talked of my promises, scolding in no gentle terms, but at last gave half what I asked, and hinted at a small annuity dependant on my silence.

"Lady Yerbury, who was supposed to be dying, could no longer further her ambition, so the story of the child would do comparatively little mischief; and Lady Mexington thought her simple denial would be sufficient

to hush any accusation by a convicted felon. From that moment I resolved that Katharine Morven, Countess of Ermiston, should have her rights; revenge, and interest alike urged me to this. Her father was next heir to the late Earl; and I owe his present lordship no gratitude: he feared to befriend me lest he should be laughed at, and left Katharine to bear her shame alone. You behaved like a man; and I rely on you to right her.

"I should have told all this before, but I knew no one would believe me without the papers; and those I have not been able to get. Nan owns that she has hid them somewhere, because she fancied I wanted to burn them, and not make the child a lady, as she calls it, but she will not give them up for threats, or entreaties. She once hinted that Katharine knew where they were; but, if so, she would scarcely have borne the reproach of having such a father for so long a time. Draw up a statement of all this; and I will

sign it on oath, only make haste, or it will be too late.—I shall cheat the hangman yet," he added with a horrid laugh.

Herbert drew up the statement, and had it duly signed, whilst one of the witnesses, a pious clergyman, spoke to Darrell of his past life—his future hopes; but the dying man scoffed at his words, striving to hide the terrors which oppressed him. His only expressed anxiety was to see Nan, and ask her forgiveness; but this was denied him—before night he was a corpse.

Such was the tale that Herbert Eustace related to the wondering Katharine; with more clearness than might have been expected from his embarrassed opening.

"Then I have not for my mother a poor crazy gipsy—nor for my father a thief, or something worse!—but dear Lady Yerbury was my mother. How glad I am I knew her, though but for so short a time; and that she loved me," exclaimed Katharine with a light-

ened heart, the large tears standing in her eyes. "No one need shun me now, and look upon me with suspicion."

"You need entertain no fear on that score; no one will shun the young, the rich, the lovely Countess of Ermiston; she will be courted, flattered, to her heart's content."

"I wish it had been any other title," remarked Katharine quickly.

"I would it had," responded Herbert still more quickly.

"Or no title; only that no guilt or shame should rest upon my parents; for that I am very, very thankful."

"You will soon learn from your grandmother how to value wealth and rank."

"I have already learnt from Mr. Eustace, that it does not require wealth or rank to ensure his generous kindness. Does he advise me to become worldly?"

Katharine was hurt at his strange manner; and showed she was.

"I fear I am in an evil mood to-day, and must entreat you to judge me mercifully, Miss Darrell—Lady Ermiston,—I should say."

"No, you should not say so. I would be Katharine Darrell still to my old friends; at least until my claim to a new name shall have been established."

"That is the point on which I would enquire," he said making no comment on the former part of her reply, though look and tone showed that he was not untouched. "Do you know any thing of these papers? Without the certificate of the marriage we may find some difficulty in establishing your rights. I can hear nothing of Nan Darrell."

Katharine considered a moment, and the scene in the old windmill came to her mind. She related the circumstance, and it was decided that some one should search the ruin immediately.

"Whom would you wish employed in this search? And in whose hands shall I place

this paper, that your claims may be at once enforced?" enquired Herbert not without embarrassment.

Katharine was silent for some moments; and then spoke with her usual frankness, though her cheek glowed the while.

"If Mr. Eustace is weary of showing kindness?—if he is unwilling to take further trouble on my account, perhaps he will advise me whom else to employ?—but if not wearied—if not unwilling, wealth and title will be more prized if owed to one who was my friend when I had none beside to help me, and who sought me out when others shunned me."

However cynical might have been Herbert's mood before, it was impossible to resist this appeal, the faltering tone giving greater power to the words; and losing his former guarded manner he poured forth thanks and offers of service in overwhelming profusion, concluding a little more soberly.

"I would I had others to deal with than

Lord Ermiston, and Lady Mexington. I may be accused of gratifying spite, envy, and malice."

"And of what shall not I be accused? What may not Lord Ermiston think of me? I would readily yield the title and half the fortune to have any other competitor than your cousin; but if you will undertake the unpleasant task, I know all will be done with delicacy, and consideration. I feel, deeply feel for his change of fortune, more particularly being the instrument to effect it; and would do every thing to soften the hardship. I must hope and trust that he will believe me incapable of any other wish than to free myself from a shameful parentage."

"Cousin Herbert come, and would see Katharine directly—and quite alone! What can the matter be?" said Mrs. Colvin entering at the moment, and veiling her curiosity, and some little reproof, under an appearance of gaiety.

"Something very strange, but very true! my inquisitive cousin," replied Herbert, advancing to shake hands.

"Indeed! Have you guardian like been proposing a husband to your ward?"

"No," answered Herbert abruptly, adding more gaily, in an under tone, glancing at the blushing Katharine, "only advising a change of name."

"I am not to be informed of this momentous secret then!" remarked Mrs. Colvin rather pettishly.

"Indeed but you are, dear Mrs. Colvin. Bid your cousin tell you."

"Come Herbert; I am dying with impatience."

"Since Miss Darrell will be so imprudent as to entrust her secret to your keeping, I cannot help it. Finding novels and romantic tales the fashion, we have been trying our hand in that way, though with no intention of publishing just at present, unless we could

propitiate the critics. Miss Darrell, instead of being Miss Darrell the child of a demented mother, and an acquisitive father, shall turn out to be in the true novel style the daughter of Lady Yerbury, and Countess of Ermiston in her own light, as crazy Nan would say. Were this only written in a book, one half the world would say how unnatural! the other half just like what one has read a thousand times; but being a real, true, and creditable story, the world can only say—Prodigious!"

"Is this true, Herbert, or only one of your good stories?"

"Out upon you, Mrs. Colvin! you know very well that ever since I ceased to be Sir Herbert Eustace, Bart., I have held it with Mr. Bampton unjustifiable, unwarrantable, and discreditable to tell a good story; but I suppose I must explain, some people are so stupid."

He did explain, and his cousin was delighted, laughing, crying, and embracing Katharine;

not love her better than
before.

"Delightful! you will ta
your haughty grandmother,
older title) and triumph ove
shaming his timid selfishne
All your wrongs avenged in
style."

"Oh, Mrs. Colvin! how
thus?" said Katharine repr
a great distress to me depri
ton of his title; and I ca
over him, I hope I shou
one."

"Ay, there is the differe
felt for you, not as you. I a

diplomatists say. His Lordship will know how to secure himself."

"You wrong Lord Ermiston; he may be timid—he cannot be mean."

"Time will show this; but I wronged you, which lies much more heavily on my conscience. How delighted the Banhams will be! I must invite them to dine here to-morrow."

"Stop! stop! I may not be able to prove my right."

"You shall, of that I am resolved. Yet alas! alas! as the moralists say, there is no pleasure without its attendant pain. With this fine title you will not remain at Farnley Lodge—Clara will be a dunce; and Charles and I must take to quarrelling for amusement. I wonder what he will say to all this?—something very original!"

"He will say that he is very glad to hear of Miss Darrell's good fortune, and happy to observe that she is more steady, than his

Herbert returned with
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Of Frederick Morver
the Earldom of Ermist
there were several heirs
title at that time, there
being one of those gall
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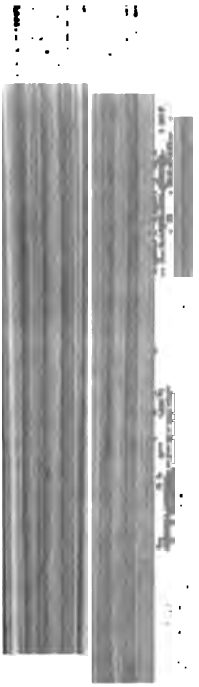
to be his daughter estal

deemed her husband's succession to the title, had he lived, of sufficient importance to be mentioned.

Indefatigable in her cause, the next day saw Herbert on his way to town, to lay Katharine's claims before Lord Ermiston, and Lady Mexington.

His Lordship showed surprise, and some vexation at the statement; but other feelings, if he indulged them, were not revealed.

He thanked Miss Darrell and his cousin for the kind and delicate way in which the information had been conveyed. Of course he should not dispute the justice of her claim could she bring proofs to establish it; but not being learned in the law, he must beg to consult his solicitor, before giving any decided answer; yet whatever might be his decision, he fully agreed with the fair claimant that every thing should be done on both sides in the most friendly spirit. He should be proud to call Miss Darrell cousin; and would rather



gentlemanly; and Herbert that his unpleasant miss regretting his cousin's admiring his elegant man what were his actual feel arine.

"What is the matter his mother anxiously, ente some minutes after. "Ar as pale as death."

"This is the matter!" ing up at her question. resign Katharine Darrel your curse if I, an Earl beggar!—now she is the the beggar! and gentle a

keenly whilst revealing Katharine's birth; but he learnt little from his scrutiny, for being just returned from a drive her veil was down on his entrance, and she sat with her back to the light. A slight start showed her surprise, but any other sign that might indicate her real feelings was suppressed; what was passing within could only be guessed in part from two exclamations sufficiently abrupt to be natural.

"The girl should have first laid her claims before me, instead of submitting them to her cousin. If this prove true my grand-daughter will be a Countess;—more—Countess of Ermiston, and Margaret Morven and her son must pine in obscurity."

At the conclusion of the explanation she remarked, "I must have time to think. My solicitor shall look over the papers which you have brought, and I shall then know how to decide. Dennis speaks falsely on many points and is not to be implicitly believed."

In drawing up Darrell's statement, Herbert had rather softened some of his charges against Lady Mexington; but enough remained to bring disgrace on her ladyship, should the statement be made public by its production on a trial. Perhaps she believed her denial of the facts would be considered enough, against the word of a man convicted by his own confession of robbery, and murder; at least she showed no anxiety for its suppression whilst in her visitor's presence.

The next day Herbert received a cold note from her ladyship thanking him for the pains he had taken in her grand-daughter's cause, whose claim she would see established; and requesting him, under the plea of saving him further trouble, to send all the papers to her solicitor, offering to defray his expences. He crushed her note when he read it; and snatching up a pen replied on the instant.

He declined giving up the papers without Lady Ermiston's permission, who had entrust-

ed them to him, adding that he should set off in a few hours for Farnley Lodge, if her ladyship had letter, or message to send.

Her ladyship sent nothing by him, but Katharine received by post a letter from her haughty grand-mother acknowledging the relationship, and commanding, rather than requesting her to join her in town immediately; to facilitate which she would send carriage and servants for her journey the next day.

It never rains, but it pours! The same post brought a letter from one of the creditors of Mr. Millar, who had been found dead in a pond a short time before, not without suspicion of suicide, a suspicion confirmed by the deranged state of his affairs, stating, that in looking over the papers of the deceased, the enclosed deed had been found, and was forwarded at Mrs. Millar's request, who was lying at the point of death. It was a deed of gift of four thousand pounds to Katharine, from Mrs. Arnold,

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Mrs. Arnold had
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It may be as well to conclude the history of the Millars at once, and clear Mrs. Arnold from every blame, but procrastination, and too great a reliance on the good principles of the selfish, and the worldly. She had delayed altering her will because unable to decide how much to leave her favorite. Her affection increasing daily, she was daily inclined to leave her a larger portion, but finding some difficulty in determining the exact amount, put off the decision from time to time till her return from Sallowfield, when, feeling that her very kindness in raising Katharine above her sphere had subjected her to the pain of Ermiston's rejection, she resolved that the will should be amended on the morrow.

How much is deferred to that fatal morrow, which to many never comes! Before retiring to rest, she had stated her intentions in writing; and in the morning on hearing that she could not see her lawyer, aware of the growing confusion in her own mind, had placed the

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appearing wealthy, but, in reality, was encumbered with debts, and entangled in dangerous speculations, having long looked to Mrs. Arnold's fortune to free him from his difficulties. That fortune became legally, though not honorably his; but those difficulties were not removed;—his speculations turned out ill—he would still make a show to the world—his creditors would wait no longer, and his death alone saved him from a prison, and being gazetted as a bankrupt. His wife died shortly after, suffering much in mind, and body; and it was from the ravings of her remorse, and the testimony of Mrs. Carter, who now told what she had overheard concerning the promise, that the truth was known. The deed of gift had not been discovered till after Mr. Millar's death; at least, so said his wife.

We will not say that Katharine felt no vexation at this intelligence; no resentment towards the Millars for their dishonourable conduct, and the evils to which that conduct

had subjected her; as well as regret that Beechen Cliff was now in the hands of another: she did feel regret, vexation, and resentment. She was but human, with human faults, and weaknesses; yet her first exclamation only showed her devoted affection for her benefactress.

"No one can blame dear Mrs. Arnold now! She was not unthinking, and cruel, as some say, but remembered the child of her care and love even in her dying hour!"

"And you ought to have been rich and happy, all the time you were poor and miserable. You can never forgive the Millars;" remarked Mrs. Colvin.

"Do not fan my vexation and resentment into a fiercer flame; I already feel too much of both; and am shocked to find how I am fretting at dear Beechen Cliff being in the hands of strangers. I did indeed require adversity to check my pride, and vanity; and had I been always rich I should not have had

such cause for gratitude as now. I should not have known half Mrs. Carter's virtues, or owed so much to you, your husband, and your cousin. Kindness is of far more worth than gold—and gratitude than years of flattery. I only hope the Countess may be as happy as your pet and companion; but I am half afraid of myself; and while thankful for noble birth, and the means of doing good, am beginning to feel a thousand anxieties which I never had before. I do verily believe, I have lost my childlike, frolic mood for ever, and have entered into the full state of womanhood, with all its pains and penalties."

"I see no symptom of such a misfortune," observed Mrs. Colvin. "What say you Herbert?"

"That I have too poor abilities to read;—

"The thoughts of a woman's mind."

"When people are too proud to ask, they must bear the blame of their ignorance," re-

marked Mr. Colvin. "If those who think themselves wise would but follow the example of us plain matter of fact people, and question till they thoroughly understand, instead of taking things for granted, the mass of human misery would be greatly lessened."

"The idea of a woman's being questioned, and cross questioned as to the state of her heart, as you question and cross question poachers and ploughboys, bailiffs and butchers! Just as if a woman's heart were a preserve, or a fallow field! Don't you know that it is a perfect garden, beautiful and fragrant; rich with flowers of a thousand lovely hues, some with thorns, and some without:—bright birds, flitting round, filling the air with harmony; and a clear fountain playing in the centre, its diamond spray coquetting with the sun beams, *àpropos* to woman smiling through her tears? There, Charles, remember all that, for I intend to make you very romantic," said his laughing wife. Then turning to Katha-

rine. "When will you come to Farnley Lodge again? Clara has the fancy that Lady Mexington is the Ogress of the fairy tale, and that you will certainly be devoured."

"To tell the truth, I am little less alarmed myself, having a due, or an undue horror of my grim grandmother."

"I thought as much, and know how it will be. She will keep you quite to herself, or marry you to some kindred monster;—sell you for more wealth and rank."

"She shall do neither," replied Katharine decidedly.

"Ay, you talk boldly in her absence; but I am sadly afraid you will be too dutiful."

"I am sadly afraid that I shall not be dutiful enough. Love her, I never can; and my ideas of the duty I owe her are very low."

"That is right, Katharine; only keep up your spirit; but she will put on one of her

terrific frowns, threaten you with bread and water, and the dungeon keep of your own castle; and you will yield, as poor Caroline yielded."

"We shall see. The thought of her conduct to my poor mother, always stirs me up to rebellion."

"Well that does sound rather womanly, I admit; but I think you had better engage Herbert to be your champion, he is just fit for a *Preux Chevalier;* a little too flighty perhaps, but he will mend of that, when weighted with a little more dull law. Suppose you demand his aid."

"He has already promised to protect me."

"Then you are safe."

"No such certainty," said Herbert. "*Preux Chevaliers* could not rescue, or protect suffering damsels unless those damsels relied on their prowess, and solicited their aid; and damsels have occasionally been blinded by

spells to their own peril. Lady Mexington detests the very sight of me, and will never let me play *Preux Chevalier* if she can help it. —And may not Lady Ermiston yield to her spells? I foretell the cut direct, or at best a mere formal bow."

"If your foretelling speaks your wishes, Mr. Eustace, so let it be; if not, should there be formality it will be entirely of your own making. I can never forget how much, how very much, I am indebted to your kindness."

"My foretelling did not speak my wishes, only my fears; and those I will endeavour to forget, and rely on your resisting Lady Mexington's influence."

"Do so. Come Clara, and help me put away my books, since we are to set off so early to-morrow."

"Why don't you marry, Herbert?" asked Mrs. Colvin abruptly, a few moments after Katharine had left the room.

"I am no longer a rich baronet to ask and

have; and if I sought a wife might have cause to say with Robert de Wace:

"Fool went I out—fool came I home."

"Nonsense! you have already won a tolerable income with the prospect of a better; besides you might choose a lady-love with fortune. Why not have Katharine? It would make me so happy to see my cousin united to my friend; the two people I love best in the world, next to myself, my quiet husband, and riotous child."

"Lady Ermiston will be expected, and may expect to make a great match; and I prefer making my own fortune to receiving it from my wife."

"So you will not have Katharine from a punctilio of pride, for it is nothing else, thou most wise barrister."

"Have Katharine! what an expression! Besides a few days since you believed her still attached to Ermiston."

"Ay, there's the rub! I am afraid she has some girlish fancy about first love, and its being very generous, and woman like:

"To love on through all ills."

And now there would be something so splendid, nay sublime, in restoring him his title with her hand, that a more common-place person than Katharine might be dazzled by the glory. In truth, if she loves him still, her woman's heart will feel more delight in this than in all the splendours, which surround her; but he must feel some difficulty in coming forward; so try what you can do in the mean time. Never was girl more grateful, and gratitude may win your cause, aided by a little pique, which she must have felt at his rejection."

"Thank you, cousin; but I have no wish to win a wife through pique; or even gratitude. I would be the first—the last—the only one, in the heart I win. If she loves Ermis-

ton, though but so little, that a mote would balance it, she will be his, through very nobleness. And why should I seek her now, when a few weeks since, with all your regard, you would have objected to her becoming my bride? My wooing, whenever it may be, shall not even wear the semblance of interest."

"Take care that your not wooing wears not the reality of pride," remarked Mr. Colvin, whose plain common sense told him secrets which more lively spirits did not suspect.

CHAPTER IV.

We met!—'twas in a crowd!—
Haynes Bayley.

"I very much doubt if Lady Mexington will thank me for escorting you to town, thinking her man and maid quite equal to the task," observed Herbert Eustace as he adjusted Katharine's shawl in the hall at Farnley Lodge.

"Then I must thank you doubly. Remember, you have promised to present me to her;

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her lips, whilst her mann
was all she wished; no p
no parade of words, but
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and such, except when
was her ordinary demean
spirit, let those calm it w
have her way;—if oppos
wrath swept all before it.

The next day Herbe
take a hurried leave of K
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within the week—he m
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It was her first visit to town. She who had been accustomed to the fresh, free air of the country, the bright, green fields, and the singing of wild birds, was oppressed by the heavy air of the great city—the hum of its countless crowds; and felt sad, and desolate, as she looked on the dark houses opposite, or listened to the incessant roll of carriages.

Of all the throng that crowded by, not one was known to her;—she had no feeling, and no sympathy with any there—and they had none with her. She knew but one in all that vast metropolis—Lord Ermiston;—and him she dreaded to encounter. Her tears fell at the thought.

Many probably envied the young, the rich, the lovely Countess of Ermiston. What would they have thought had they seen her weeping there? It is the temper of our mind which brings us happiness, not state or circumstance. A tear falling on her hand, roused her atten-

tion; she had been weeping unconsciously. She looked up—her grandmother's keen eye was on her; and there was a stern knitting of her brows which boded little good.

"I am very silly to feel thus—but a crowded city is to me the most melancholy of places," remarked Katharine in an apologetic tone.

"You will soon mend of that folly," observed her grandmother coldly. "You go with me this evening to your uncle's to be introduced to some of your relatives; in a short time you will cease to consider London lonely."

Katharine hinted a wish for a day's quiet; but the Countess was resolute. She would yield to her wish of not attending any very large parties, given by strangers, till after her first change of mourning for Lady Yerbury; but to refuse to visit friends and relatives was a folly that she could not countenance.

"I have no wish to shun friends, and relatives; but I do wish to live retired, till my claims shall be allowed or disallowed."

"The very reason why I choose you to go out," said her grandmother, assuming at once the command which she intended to maintain. "Lady Ermiston must be introduced to the friends, and connections of her family, as Lady Ermiston, taking at once her proper station in society. Leave it to those who have no right to the title which they have usurped to hide in corners."

"Lord Ermiston had no reason to believe himself an usurper, and I should be very sorry to do any thing which could be construed into a want of feeling or delicacy."

Lady Mexington looked at her searchingly, with a sterner knitting of her brows.

"Feeling and delicacy towards him who rejected you so scornfully! Where is your maidenly pride? Would you kneel at his

feet—hold up your coronet—and pray him to accept of it—and you?"

"I would do nothing unbecoming a high born maiden, and there can never again be question of a union between us," replied Katharine undismayed by her wrath, though her colour rose at the sarcasm.

"I trust so; my malediction on you if you think to wed with him. My haughty cousin shall be humbled—Margaret Morven and her dainty son shall go back to penury and pride; they must have time, forsooth ere they decide on yielding that to which they have no right! Unable to dispute your being Frederick Morven's lawful heiress, they profess to doubt the descent of the title in the female line, in spite of proof to that effect. You may thank yourself and your silly advisers for this, asking your title as a favor, instead of demanding it as a right; permitting them to see that you may be tampered with. Fortunately, the folly

of asking no arrears was not on paper, consequently not binding; and I shall order my solicitor to write to Mr. Morven claiming all that is due, even to the uttermost farthing—unless he will acknowledge your rights at once."

"Pardon me, Lady Mexington, but this must not be. My word is pledged that no arrears shall be claimed, since, at the worst, he was an innocent usurper; and I would not recall my words, even if I could. Forgive me if I say that I am the person to be consulted on this point; and I will consent to no act that can be considered ungenerous to Mrs. Morven, or her son; their trial must be hard to bear without any aggravation."

Lady Mexington gazed in surprise on the slight girl before her, looking still younger than she really was. She who had been accustomed to rule all—was she to be thwarted by a mere child? Her eyes flashed as she spoke.

"You the person to be consulted! And you will not consent! Learn obedience and humility; and, baby as you are, be thankful that you have a relative who will assert your rights. You are too young to guide yourself."

"I am one and twenty, madam; and the laws of my country give me rule over myself at that age."

"Dare you bandy words with me, boasting of a power which you are unfit to use? Let me hear no more of this! I stand in the place of your parents. I command—I expect—I will have implicit, unquestioning obedience, and shall write as I proposed."

"For my sake; for your sake, madam, I entreat you not. Rather than suffer it, I will assert my power and employ some other solicitor, who will conduct the suit, if such must be, on just and honorable terms. Shall I so needing forgiveness myself exact to the uttermost from others? It is for you to decide

how far a publication of the evidence would be agreeable or desirable; no shame shall rest on my mother's name."

Lady Mexington's cheek grew pale as she glared on the daring girl, who withstood that rage before which so many wills had bowed. Katharine shrank not from the gaze, though her own cheek paled at the encounter, and after a short scrutiny the haughty Countess turned away.

"You may go," she said in a hoarse voice, waving her hand for her departure. "I yield to your wishes for this once; beware how you oppose mine for the future!"

"I am sorry," began Katharine.

"I want no excuse—begone!"

Katharine went, and the Countess gave way to the rage which she had not dared to display in her presence.

"She shall do my bidding yet," she muttered. "She has her father's spirit, and his compelling eye when roused, gentle as she

seems at other times; but that spirit shall yet bend to mine—her mother's did, and so shall hers. I hated her father—and she is like him;—I saw the likeness at the first glance."

When next they met Lady Mexington showed no trace of anger, but greater kindness than before; and Katharine, thankful for the change, did all she could to please her.

Days passed, and Lady Ermiston, having been introduced to innumerable friends and relatives, could no longer complain with justice that she knew no one in all that passing crowd, yet she often caught herself sighing to return to Farnley Lodge, though, ashamed of her discontent, she endeavoured to subdue it. Acquainted with many, she was intimate with none; and there was something chilling and repulsive to her warm frank heart, in her haughty grandmother, even in her kindest and most gracious moods; though the Countess

won by Katharine's respectful attention, and pleased by the admiration she excited, began to view her with regard as well as pride.

"Do they call this a small party?" asked Katharine as she entered a drawing room, in one of the fashionable squares, splendidly lit, and she considered sufficiently filled.

"To be sure child. It is a very small party for London; and the dowager Lady Haddingly is my particular friend."

The Marquis of Haddingly, the bachelor son of the hostess, joined Katharine on her entrance, and showed no inclination to quit her side; nor did she wish that he should, for having met him nearly every day since her arrival in town, she was glad, amid so many strangers, to have a comparatively old acquaintance to talk with. Her animated manner was always particularly pleasing to those with whom she was conversing; and others who could see but not hear, occasionally judged the

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The departure of some of the company caused a crowding towards the spot where Katharine was standing, and the blonde scarf of a lady, who was endeavouring to pass, became entangled in her dress. The lady and the gentleman on whose arm she was leaning turned to apologise and disengage the scarf—they were Mrs. Morven and Lord Ermiston.

All felt the awkwardness of the adventure, but Katharine's embarrassment was most apparent. After a slight hesitation, Mrs. Morven and her son both bowed; and the latter, whilst disengaging the blonde, apologised with his usual grace. Katharine replied with winning sweetness, laying the blame on the crowd and commenting on the assembly, considering that to be a neutral subject incapable of awakening any unpleasant feeling, being anxious to prove that she felt no resentment—sought no triumph. His Lordship answered in the same strain.—The crowd dispersed—

and Lord Ermiston and his mother bowed and passed on.

Let who will abuse the heat and the cold, the rain and the sun-shine, as subjects of discourse! How could the world go on or at least visiting, without such neutral, unoffending topics? Scandal is wicked—politics dangerous—fashion frivolous—literature blue—science labored. How could one entertain one's friends if one might not growl at the dust, or wonder at the rain? Yes! Yes! to mud, and to dust—to rain, and to sun-shine—to wind, and to calm—to heat, and to frost—be glory and honor! England is indeed a favored land! With her variable climate, there need be no dearth of conversation; and with the addition of rail roads, and suspension bridges, one may talk for ever without offending—or informing any one; perfectly guiltless of expressing an idea, or awakening one. What a happiness to have been born an English woman!

The Marquis again sought Katharine's side, and flattered by the attention which she bestowed on his sense, laid aside his usual coxcombry and folly; whilst she forgot, or rather never imagined that her earnest attention might give rise to comment or conjecture. In the midst of the recital of one of his Lordship's continental adventures, she turned suddenly to the right, whence she had heard the name of Eustace.

Herbert was standing a few paces off, and returning her bow immediately approached, though not she thought with such alacrity as he might have shown.

"I need not ask how you are, but shall send a postcript to Clara, assuring her that Lady Ermiston in town is still more admired—and loved," he added after a pause, "than was Miss Darrell at Farnley Lodge; the silly child fancied that you would miss the affection of its inhabitants. Have you any message? I write to-morrow."

Lady Ermiston hesitated;—she was annoyed—she did not like Herbert's manner.

"Come, Katharine, I am waiting for you," said Lady Mexington.

"Allow me!" interposed the Marquis, offering his arm to Katharine, who, as Herbert drew back, could not decline it.

Lady Mexington, resigning her granddaughter to his care, passed on with her own escort, bowing graciously to Mr. Eustace; and Katharine was obliged to follow; but she paused one moment to say: "Give my love to Mrs. Colvin and Clara."

Herbert bowed without reply, whilst the Marquis whispered; "I could not keep honest with such a temptation, but should retain that treasure for myself."

Katharine's look (she did not speak) was by no means flattering, she was vexed with Herbert, herself, and the Marquis.

Her message was so very commonplace—

but she thought Lord Haddingly's remark was more so.

Lady Mexington was mistaken; the carriage was not waiting, as she had said; and the Marquis left them in the cloak room whilst he went to make enquiries. Katharine acquired two pieces of information during his absence.

"Eustace has been back these four days, I met him at Horlock's on Monday; and to judge from what I saw there and here, the pretty Mary Silverton will soon cease to bear her maiden name," observed a Mr. Panton.

"And the Countess of Ermiston will shortly be advanced to a Marquisate. How I envied Haddingly that delightful flirtation in the corner! It is a pity that her title should be lost in a higher one; she ought to give herself to some poor wretch of a younger son," replied his friend.

"Yourself, I suppose; but—hush—" and

the young men walked away, having caught a glimpse of Lady Mexington.

So, Herbert Eustace had been returned four days, yet had not called, in spite of his parting promise; and had made no excuse—had not even approached her till she had bowed. Had he been so fully occupied with pretty Mary Silverton?

"Are you asleep, child?" asked Lady Mexington sharply, as they were returning home. "I have spoken twice and received no answer."

"I beg your pardon. The carriages make so much noise; and my country ears are not yet accustomed to the din."

"You have heard me very well at other times. I ask why you refused the Marquis permission to call on you to-morrow with his sketches, pleading a visit which migh just as well have been deferred?"

"Because I did not wish to see him," replied Katharine with a coolness which provoked the Countess.

"A plain answer, certainly; and a simple one to the outward ear; I trust it has no hidden meaning. Do you propose playing the fool or the coquette?"

"Neither; with your good leave, grandmamma."

"Both, I suspect. Take care; the Marquis is not a person to be trifled with."

"I would trifle with no one."

"Then why decline his visit?"

Katharine hesitated.

"Speak girl!" said the Countess imperiously.

"I fear you will chide my presumption. The Marquis talked nonsense, as he handed me to the carriage, and I overheard others doing the like; by declining his visit, I hoped to check this."

"There is no presumption in your idea; and no need for checking what you call nonsense," observed the Countess with a smile of

satisfaction. The Marquis's wishes are sanctioned by me and his mother."

"I am sorry to hear this; and shall feel much obliged if you will inform his lordship, that he can never be more to me than he is at present. The sooner he understands this the better."

"Do you mean me to tell him that you will not become Marchioness of Haddingly?"

"Certainly."

"And what reason am I to assign?"

"The most polite, and least painful which truth will admit of."

"What do you object to in him? Most young ladies think him perfect;—rich, handsome, pleasing, and good tempered."

"I believe him good tempered, and he can be very pleasant, when he forgets to be a coxcomb; but I doubt the stability of his principles, if his wavering opinions deserve that name; and our general tastes accord but ill."

"Doubt the stability of his principles! one would think it was some cynical old grandpapa discussing his lordship. This is for me to think of and not you. What girl troubles herself about the principles of a young, and handsome Marquis willing to become her lover? And what should you know of his principles? Have you been enquiring into his private life? Very delicate, and very proper."

"I have made no enquiries, and heard no one speak of him but yourself. I judge him only by his conversation."

"Folly! Do you expect a young Marquis to talk like an old Bishop? Have you no other objection?"

"Yes; one that is insurmountable. I cannot love, and therefore will not marry him."

"And you tell me this as coolly as though you were only finding fault with a dress—or declining a briefless barrister—or some poor creature shorn of wealth and title," burst forth

her ladyship, yielding to the wrath which she had before with difficulty repressed. "What has a Countess—one highly born—to do with love. Leave that to the vulgar and the low; she should choose as befits her station. Let me hear no more of this folly! You marry the Marquis of Haddingly."

"I am sorry to oppose you; but I cannot become the Marchioness of Haddingly."

Lady Ermiston could not see her grandmother's look at this firm reply, and if she spoke, her words were lost in the opening of the carriage door, and the letting down the steps; but her hope of escaping further contention was disappointed, for Lady Mexington, instead of returning her good night, resumed the conversation as soon as they were alone in the drawing room.

"You should know enough of me to understand that I will not be thwarted with impunity. Your rank is not as secure as you imagine, and were I to throw you off, you

might find it impossible to establish your claims. Have a care, lest I send you back to the obscurity, from which I called you.—Receive the Marquis as your future husband."

Katharine was silent for some moments. There was that in the look and tone of the Countess which might well have daunted a timid girl; but receive the Marquis as a lover she would not; and she thought it more honorable to state this frankly, though her cheek paled at the wrath she dreaded.

"I spoke the truth, madam, when I said that I was sorry to oppose your wishes, but I must not mislead you. I entreat you to urge me no further on this point; to do so would pain me—but would be useless."

"Why useless?" demanded the Countess grasping her arm, and looking keenly into her face.

Katharine shrank from her rude touch, and her stern look.

"You shrink, but you answer not. Silly

girl! do you think to blind and turn me? Why useless? Do you love another?—one beneath you, as your wretched mother did? Take warning by her fate—she opposed me—but in vain!"

Katharine shrank no more; she threw off the grasp on her arm, and the Countess involuntarily drew back.

"Name not my mother, madam, if you would not have her daughter forget that she is your grandchild. I do take warning by her fate;—and by her words. I know from her own lips the story of her sufferings; a broken hearted widow forced by you to take a vow she could not keep. I fear not the obscurity with which you threaten me;—woe is woe, though it dwell in a gilded palace; and the brow will ache beneath a coronet."

Before Lady Mexington had recovered from the surprise, and wrath occasioned by her grandchild's boldness, Katharine had quitted the room, leaving the Countess to reconcile

herself as she best could to an opposition which she had not expected, and could ill brook. Had Katharine seen her ladyship's countenance as she sank into a chair she might have trembled at her own temerity; and had the Countess seen her granddaughter's wan cheek, and heard her bitter weeping when alone in her chamber, stern as she was, she might have felt some pity.

CHAPTER V.

What will he think?—and what to say—I cannot—cannot tell.
Spanish Ballad.

Lady Mexington not only knew how to work her purpose through bursts of passion, but was equally versed in all those petty arts of vexing, which are sometimes more effective than sudden rage, and for some days her grand-daughter's temper was sorely tried. The Countess talked at her, and of her; thwarted every wish without open contradic-

tion, and encouraged the Marquis, till convinced by Katharine's guarded coolness of the vanity of hoping to win her affections, he gave up the attempt, too proud to become an instrument in her Ladyship's hands to compel a reluctant assent.

Katharine tried to bear all this thwarting with uncomplaining patience, and whilst she mourned her own occasional fretfulness, the Countess marvelled at a gentleness so rarely ruffled, try it as she would, and either from pity, weariness, admiration, or some other inexplicable reason, relaxed her labours in tormenting. Perhaps she saw that Katharine's cheek grew paler day by day; that she paid less heed to what was passing round her; and feared to lose so fair a scion of her race who might yet increase its honors.

Her grand-daughter did not enquire the cause of so welcome a change, glad to be spared those hourly persecutions from which she had none to shield her.

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much within doors. We will drive in the park to-day, and call on Mrs. Morven in the way; thus showing our wish to be on friendly terms, as you desired."

Katharine coloured, either from the suddenness of the proposition, or a knowledge that her grandmother's keen eye was on her; but readily assented, though conscious that she should feel embarrassed in a meeting with the mother—still more embarrassed in a meeting with the son. And she was doomed to both, for both were in the drawing room when they entered, and could not restrain a little show of surprise at the visit, though they welcomed the visitors with studied politeness.

Lady Mexington was unusually gracious, and the wondering Mrs. Morven followed her lead; whilst Katharine, pleased with her grandmother's attention to her wishes, soon found herself, to her great surprise, conversing with Lord Ermiston with a gaiety and frankness, which she had never anticipated. Once

or twice there was a slight pause from an approach to dangerous subjects, when they unadvisedly deserted the neutral ground of wind and weather; but the difficulty was soon removed by a new wording, or a new subject; and neither were aware how long the visit had been prolonged, till the Countess rose to depart, graciously accepting Lord Ermiston's arm to her carriage.

It certainly was a sunny day with her Ladyship. Every one who met her said they had not seen her look so well for years, or found her so pleasant;—no pride or ill humour, only the lofty bearing which some thought fitting to her rank. She used not a harsh word to any one, and absolutely kissed Katharine before going to a dinner party, telling her to join her early, and bring all her roses with her.

Katharine gazed at her as she departed in surprise; said something about 'after a tempest comes a calm,' and then thought on other

things. She had wished to spend the evening at home, but her grandmother would not hear of it; and it was therefore arranged that she should join her early, before the rest of the evening guests had arrived, that she might be spared the entering a crowded room, where so many would be strangers;—but things will not always fall out as they should. Owing to some accidental circumstance, instead of being early, she was late, how late she did not know from her thoughts being otherwise engaged, till she arrived at Lady Sturton's. Lord Ermiston was in the cloak room, and came forward on the instant, taking her shawl, and giving it to the attendant.

"You are late; I had no idea that you were become so fashionable."

He spoke gaily, and she replied in the same tone.

"The servants must bear the praise, or the blame, whichever it may be—

"Sure it was none of I!"

"On the contrary, I retain so much of my country awkwardness, that if I dared, I should send for Lady Mexington to protect me through the crowd."

"Will you allow me to be your protector?" said his Lordship eagerly, offering his arm as he spoke.

At Sallowfield he had rejected her as a wife —at Swansea he had even disowned her as an acquaintance—and now was her hand to rest on his arm, as it had done in those days, when he had loved her? Involuntarily she drew back at the thought; then, distressed at his evident pain, from her movement, she placed her arm within his. Some low words in an unsteady voice were his thanks for this proof of forgiveness; and before they had reached the top of the stairs he was again conversing gaily; but not as gaily did Katharine reply. As they passed through the anteroom occupied by those who sought cooler air than the saloon afforded, she caught looks and words which deepened the colour on her

cheek; and her confusion was heightened to a painful excess when she heard the attendants announce in a stentorian voice, Lord and Lady Ermiston. Had she not felt the awkwardness of such an announcement at the first instant, the looks, the smiles, the whisperings of many, would have taught her to understand it. The ridicule of it was apparent to herself, that the two antagonists for the same title, once lovers, should enter arm-in-arm, and be announced as man and wife was enough to make the most sober smile.

Poor Katharine was ready to sink with vexation and confusion, aware that all eyes, Herbert's among the number, were upon her; and losing all presence of mind, from the consciousness of general observation, and the idea of what Lord Ermiston himself might think, she clung for a moment to his arm without daring to look up, and then almost seized on that of Lady Sturton, much to the surprise of that lady, a cold stately woman, whom she

had seen but once before. A general buzz of remarks, and a but half suppressed titter followed this sudden clinging to, and as sudden relinquishment of Lord Ermiston's arm; but how is sensitive mind had endured the ridicule she did not know, not having dared to glance towards him. When she found him by her side a short time after, she observed nothing but his usual easy elegance; and a something that reminded her slightly of by gone hours.

The turning of Lady Sturton to welcome a fresh guest, brought Katharine close to Herbert. He took the hand which she held out to him, according to custom, but relinquished it instantly;—made a cold reply to her rather formal enquiry touching his health, adding that he had never seen her looking better—she had a brilliant colour at the moment,—and then turned again to the young lady with whom he had been conversing—the pretty Mary Silver-

ton, as Katharine learnt in the course of the evening.

Katharine Darrell and Herbert Eustace no longer stood in the same position as they had done at Farnley Lodge. That was certain!

"You find the heat too much for you, Lady Ermiston. Will you go with me into the inner room,—it is cooler there?" said one of the innumerable cousins to whom she had been introduced, a kind-hearted woman, who thought from her paleness that she was in danger of fainting. The offer was thankfully accepted.

Lady Mexington and Mrs. Morven were standing together when the extraordinary announcement of Lord and Lady Ermiston caused both to turn towards the door. Mrs. Morven coloured with vexation, afraid that her haughty cousin might think she and her son had planned the *contre temps;* but when she

ventured to glance at her Ladyship, to her great surprise, instead of anger or contempt, she saw only a bland smile.

"A very handsome couple," observed Lady Mexington graciously.

"There are few to equal them," replied the wondering Mrs. Morven.

"It was rather an embarrassing announcement, considering the past; and poor Katharine, unused to observation, cannot carry off a *contre tems* as your son does; his easy elegance is admirable, I wish there was no dispute between them."

"So do I most sincerely; for your granddaughter's conduct has excited our admiration —I may say won our regard and gratitude. I did not know her once, as I know her now, and regret the course I took; but that regret comes too late. My son cannot be expected to yield rank and wealth without a struggle, contrary to the advice of his lawyer, though he deplores the necessity of the contest even

more than myself. It is very unpleasant particularly between relations."

"It is Mrs. Morven, and I feel it is so; and law is very expensive—and very slow; one may wear away one's life in expectation, and win only ruin at last. It might have been better if the young people had chosen to settle the matter between themselves; but young people will have a way of their own—little punctilios of pride as to the first advance; and take no heed of hints even from those the most attached to them. I do not see though why we should not be friends; we, who can neither be Earl nor Countess of Ermiston."

Before half an hour had elapsed, Mrs. Morven and her son were engaged to dine at Lady Mexington's on the succeeding day; and the latter, as we have said, was again by Katharine's side, who talked with a gaiety and hurried manner which spoke of nervous excitement, rather than quiet happiness.

"Oh dear Lady Ermiston, I am so glad to

see you! So rejoiced to find your many virtues rewarded! If my dear friend had but lived to see this day, how she would have gloried in her adopted child!" exclaimed Mrs. Banham taking both her hands.

"Mrs. Arnold could not have loved me more than she did;—hers was not a heart given to wealth, and withdrawn from poverty."

Mrs. Banham looked a little conscious, but called her daughters to her aid. Maria and Charlotte were warm in the extreme, notwithstanding Katharine's coolness; and Mrs. Banham urged her dear Lady Ermiston to spend a day with them; but this her dear Lady Ermiston declined, saying with a quiet smile;

"Suppose we defer it till my claim to wealth and title shall be fully established."

"I see you know the Banhams;" remarked Lord Ermiston, when they had passed on.

"I have reason to know them; but we will not recur to the past."

"Oh, no! Would that I could blot its remembrance from your mind—at least, some part."

"Not so; the remembrance of the whole may be a salutary lesson for us both; from the past we must learn wisdom to guide us for the future," replied Katharine with a sigh; then entering on a new subject, she resumed her former gaiety.

"What are you laughing at, Hensworth?" asked Herbert Eustace.

"A ridiculous story of Fenton's which he insists on every one's receiving as truth, though beyond the bounds of possibility. He has lied from youth to age, till he cannot distinguish the true from the false. He is very entertaining, but I should as soon believe an assertion of childlike innocence from the most dexterous thief in christendom as credit one of his stories."

"And yet you applauded him."

"To be sure; he is a most amusing fellow

—and who would not laugh w
That is my philosophy. You
last person to say any thing ag
who were once famous for y
stories."

"You hear;" said a gentlem
the speakers, "such might you
liar in your youth—a liar in y
always give things their right
losing your fortune you lost y
and a good story without good
an idle waste of words.—A lau
echo is a worthless nothing."

"Ha! Mr. Bell, is that you
had a schooling from you fo
day;" and Herbert shook the
more cordially than he ha
before.

"Schooling is thrown away,
will not learn;" growled Mr. B
hoarse as usual.

"Very true; I did not give

of doing your schooling honor then; but I hope I am improving now, since I have been employed in making a fortune for myself, instead of amusement for others."

"You were forced to that;—study or starve became your only alternatives. I always said that poverty would do you good."

"True, sir, for which I did not thank you."

"People are never thankful for being told the truth."

"Not often, I admit; but then a bare, harsh truth puts me in mind of a staring new red brick house; it may be valuable—but it shocks one's taste—revolts one's love for the beautiful. Plant round it—adorn it with roses and jasmines—embower it in beauty and fragrance, and it will be just as useful, and far more attractive: those who formerly beheld it with disgust will then look on it with admiration."

"Yes, laud the frippery, and think not of

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most pleasing form. Needlessly to wound a man's self love, is not the way to lure him on to good—it retards his course; for who travels easily along even a flowery path, who has a galling wound unhealed? With all our boasted reason, we men are like turkies; you may lead us with a scarlet rag—you cannot drive us with the whip."

Despite his cynicism, Mr. Bell could not help being touched by the young man's frankness; and amused by his whimsical illustration.

"This does look a little better; but you are like the herd whose folly you perceive, yet imitate. Why not go the right road, when you admit it to be such, whether the scarlet rag be held before, or the whip behind?"

"This is human nature! the pride and stubbornness of our wills, that to prove our free agency, would rush down a precipice rather than submit to a withdrawing arm. You must make man other than he is, before

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"One question. Would you be Sir Herbert Eustace if the choice were yours?"

"You probe deeply, Mr. Bell, and I fear with no kindly meaning; you would rather wound than heal. Why ask if I differ from the herd to which you likened me? Why question when you would not credit; or would scoff at my reply?

"I repeat the question. Would you be Sir Herbert Eustace? Dare you answer this with truth?"

"With truth, or not at all. I will not say that I know the depths of my own heart, for each hour shows me more of my own ignorance; and that choice would be a sore temptation. I hope the loss of fortune has been to me a real blessing, though grievous at the time; yet the trial would be great, for I love Eustace Park—the home of my happy childhood—the scene of a father's care:—I love every tree, and shrub, ay, even every blade of the green grass; and wealth, and

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don't like her new name, and would not weight her open brow with a coronet; she should only have nature's richest gems wreathed in with her bright curls; lovely flowers coloured by the sunbeams, nourished and scented by the diamond dew. You see I can talk nonsense as well as a young coxcomb. Look at her! what is she like?"

"Like? oh! like those very flowers with which you would deck her; coloured by the sunbeam, nourished by the dew—of love and admiration, I conclude. All light, and life, and happiness! But she does not despise the coronet of which you would deprive her; and will wear precious gems, if but to show how much she can outshine them. The diamond would be dim beside that glancing eye."

"You are indeed no wiser than your fellows, Herbert Eustace; and the next time you waste your rhapsodies on me, let them be spoken in a less bitter tone. All light, and life—and happiness! There is darkness in

her heart! there is death upon
happiness is far away. Go
wild sparkling of that eye,—it
the light of happiness?—
music though it be—is it the l
hectic flushing, does it speak
happy! See her when none e
cheek will have grown wan—th
—and that gay laugh be husl
light—it does not suit her.
calm in happiness which sh
have said all have their idols
self—is not yours pride?"

"What can you mean?"
eagerly.

"I am no lexicographer,
furnish meanings for my o
wonder that he who cannot
should not be able to put
form words. If people will n
might see, I am not bound to
if people will make themsel

am not forced to make them happy;" and refusing to be detained, but with a muttered, "follow," Mr. Bell walked up to Katharine, shaking hands with her after making a very formal bow to Lord Ermiston, who by no means thanked him for interrupting his further *tête-a-tête* with his fair cousin, whom he had never found more lively and fascinating.

"It is a long time since we have met, and strange things have come to pass in the mean while, Miss Darrell, for I don't like your other grand name, and I hope you will never be Lady Ermiston;—it would not suit you—I always said so."

Katharine's gaiety was gone in a moment; she looked down—a tear stood on her long lashes, and her fingers played unconsciously with a flower which she had just been admiring. Even Mr. Bell was at a loss to know whether her emotion arose merely from the

remembrance of the death of Mrs. Arnold, and her subsequent sufferings; or was occasioned by the last part of his sentence.

"Have you been very happy since you came to town?" he continued, looking keenly at her.

The playing fingers pulled off the head of the rose;—she stooped to pick it up—then answered gaily.

"How can it be otherwise? You always said that a first visit to town was enough to turn the head of any woman under forty"

"And I said truly, for you are not the Katharine Darrell I once knew; you are no longer a playful child, without deceit or guile; you are a woman—a real woman—a London woman! looking one thing and feeling another. Your very gaiety is Town gaiety;—not natural, but forced; not the spontaneous product of the heart's rich soil, but a sickly exotic compelled into flower for a night, to

be admired for an hour;—that past—it fades, and dies—and is no longer seen. I liked you better as you were."

"How very rude! you really must take lessons in flattery, Mr. Bell," replied Katharine, trying to laugh off her embarrassment.

"He must at least defer putting them in practice till another time, as your cousin, whom we are to set down, is waiting," observed Lady Mexington bowing to Mr. Bell.

Katharine rose with alacrity; wished Mr. Bell good night; and took Lord Ermiston's offered arm.

"Mrs. Morven and her son dine with us to-morrow, will you join the party, Mr. Eustace? I hope matters will be arranged without a law-suit," whispered Lady Mexington glancing at her grand-daughter and Lord Ermiston, who was paying Katharine a thousand little cares.

Gracious as was the invitation, Herbert declined it on the plea of business; remarking

that his presence could not be required to facilitate the arrangement.

"Not in the least; only as Lady Ermiston's friend, you would of course rejoice in all being settled amicably."

Herbert bowed, and her Ladyship passed on.

"Take care! deceit is a dangerous path to tread; and coquetry leads to guile and sorrow. The inexperienced become entangled in webs of their own weaving, and fall a prey to more skilful fowlers. Why must the lip laugh, whilst the heart is breaking?"

Katharine started at the whispered words, low, but distinct. Mr. Bell was beside her speaking more kindly than was his wont.

"Why should you think?" she began, but a movement among the crowd parted them at the instant and she saw him no more.

Lady Mexington was in wonderful good temper and good spirits; she made no remark on the awkward announcement, neither did

Katharine. "Mrs. Morven and her son dine here to-morrow," she observed as they were separating for the night, "and I asked Mr. Eustace to meet them, but he declined, muttering something about business. So you see I am willing to please you in all things, and am not quite the tyrant you believed me but a short time since; I was annoyed at your conduct then, I must admit. Mrs. Morven seems inclined to receive our friendly advances in a friendly spirit; and we should meet her more than half way."

"Certainly; and I thank you most sincerely for consulting my wishes, having much at heart the absence of all enmity between us. Do you not think that putting the papers into the hands of some other solicitor would facilitate this? Mr. Watson is said to resent Lord Ermiston's having employed some other adviser soon after his accession to the title; and to tell the truth, I do not like Mr. Watson's

manner; he does not gi
an honest man."

"It is better for you
remain where they are,"
ington with an expressi
peculiar that Katharine
her gaze, though unal
"Good night," added
the discussion by leaving

CHAPTER VI.

The desolater, desolate!
The victor, overthrown!
The arbiter of other's fate—
A suppliant for his own!—

Byron.

Lord Ermiston came the next day, and the next, and the next, for more than a week, encouraged by Lady Mexington's gracious manner, and Katharine's friendly welcome; yet Katharine was not what she had been at Lady Sturton's. The animation, the brilliancy which had excited so much admiration then,

was no longer observable, the hectic flush was gone—the gay laugh hushed,—and her smiles were rare, and scarcely natural; but then she was enduring a severe cold; and that besides being a destroyer of beauty, occasions a low, wretched feel, and a disinclination to all exertion; so Lady Ermiston lay on the sofa, or sat in the easy chair, whilst Lord Ermiston read and talked to her, or looked at her, just as it might be, in a proper cousin like manner, as Katharine thought; what Lady Mexington and Mrs. Morven thought of his manner was another matter.

"Have you finished that book sweet cousin?" asked his Lordship after all proper enquiries concerning her cold, and congratulations on its amendment.

"How could I? Have I not been studying law all the morning? Why there is as much fuss to prove me to be Katharine Morven that is, Katharine Darrell that was, as though I had endeavoured to make myself out the

lineal descendant of Alexander the Great, or the renowned Genghis Khan; and yet all this must be done before I can avail myself of dear Mrs. Arnold's gift. Oh law! law! so dull—so prosy—so many words, meaning all the same thing, or nothing; whole sentences to be passed by, or forgotten, if one would comprehend the remainder. I never will engage in a law suit—of that I am determined."

"I am delighted to hear you say so!" exclaimed his Lordship, approaching Katharine with looks expressing the delight of which he spoke.

"I forgot. I did not mean that, so you need not congratulate yourself on a victory," she replied, vexed at her own want of thought; and a little annoyed at his manner.

"Will nothing satisfy you but a battle to decide our claims? Would that they might be arranged more peaceably!"

"You cannot wish this more sincerely, or

half as warmly as myself. I have ever been reluctant to pursue my claims, feeling that the loss must naturally bring more pain to you than can the gain bring joy to me; but I understood that you were averse to an amicable arrangement."

"Do not believe this! there is nothing I desire more ardently."

"Indeed! I am delighted; for I dread the uncertainty of law—its long delays, and longer details, more than I used to dread Mr. Bampton's long stories. Suppose we settle the dispute at once then. Each shall name an arbiter who shall decide, after seeing all the documents; we, of course, agreeing to abide by their decision. Should they disagree, we will decide it by the common game of pitch and toss, I think they call it; the one who loses the estates and title, receiving all that would have gone for law expences; and so we shall outwit the lawyers."

Lord Ermiston could not forbear a smile at

her whimsical proposition, though that proposition was not exactly to his taste.

"Why should we not decide the point fair Katharine, by a still shorter mode?"

"Oh fie! my Lord; wanting me to play at pitch and toss for an Earldom without the previous intervention of arbiters to excuse it. What would grandmamma say? You presume on my ignorance of the game, which I admit; so I shall not play till I have taken lessons."

"I have no desire that you should play at pitch and toss," replied his Lordship rather gravely; for fascinating as would have been her gaiety at any other time, it did not agree with his present mood.

"Then how would you settle it? I thought you had as great a horror of a suit in the Court of Chancery as myself."

"Perhaps greater; but why not end dispute by a suit in the court of love? Give me but your heart, dear Katharine, and I will receive the title at your hands, prizing it the more as

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him.

"An

best! S

did unw

wha

dear Katharine, though but one word;—or may I read your silence as I wish?"

"No. No. You ask what I cannot grant —what you should not have expected."

"You said you had forgiven—"

"I have forgiven;—but I have also ceased to love."

Lord Ermiston spoke not:—he stood before her pale and agitated, her words "I have also ceased to love," still ringing in his ears—the death knell of his hopes; and Katharine bowed her head, scarcely less moved. His manner had recalled the past so strongly to her mind;—their mutual vows—the love of her early youth, that she felt like a guilty thing, and dared not meet his eye;—her love had passed away—his lingered still! She forgot, for the time, how he had once renounced that love.

A loud double knock threatened fresh visitors. Lord Ermiston looked on Katharine, and then rushed from the room by one door,

as the servant announced the guests
other, whilst his cousin did the honors
house, with as much composure as she
command.

"What is the meaning of this?" a
Lady Mexington the next morning, givi
note to Katharine, who coloured as she re
nised the writing of her cousin; yet there wa
cause for emotion, as the note contained nothi
more important than an excuse for not dini
with them as he had engaged to do. "Wh
does not Lord Ermiston dine here to-day?
enquired the Countess, looking inquisitively a
her grand-daughter.

"His Lordship is obliged to leave town."

"I learn that from the note; but I ask of
you—why he is obliged to leave town?"

"I am not answerable for his Lordship's
movements; he said nothing of his departure
yesterday."

"Take care! I am not to be trifled
with."

Katharine trembled at the warning but made no reply.

"Lord Ermiston has been here every day, almost all day, for more than a week; he was here yesterday—went away abruptly—passed me without a bow, and to-day sends a cold excuse for not dining with us; yet you say that you are not answerable for his movements. I ask you again, why he does not dine here to-day?"

"I wish there were no such creatures as men! they bring me nothing but woe and trouble," thought poor Katharine in her fear, and vexation, foreseeing from her Ladyship's manner a second edition of her former persecution.

"Still silent! Is this from fear, regret, or obstinacy? Give me a plain answer to one simple question. Has Lord Ermiston made an offer, and have you refused him? Speak girl!"

"Your suspicion I am grieved to say is

Think of this, and tell me, if you dare that you do not love him."

"I do not love him; all this was caused by the remembrance of the past, the awkwardness of the present;—unpractised in the world, I cannot hide what I would fain conceal."

The Countess looked as if she would look her through, growing the sterner as the trembling girl turned from her keen gaze.

"You loved not Lord Haddingly—you love not Lord Ermiston—whom do you love?"

Katharine was silent, till her Ladyship repeating the question, she replied in some confusion, "I will wed none!"

The Countess laughed a scornful laugh.

"Look in that glass! Now tell me with that face and figure; with youth and rank and fortune that you will wed with none. Think you that I am grown blind and deaf? You will marry—marry within the year—marry as I please—you shall not wed beneath you. I spare you—I ask no questions;—in return, I

Ermiston as your future husband. I say not this without a reason;—yes?—or no?"

"No!" said Katharine in a low, but steady voice.

"Then your fate be on your own head," remarked the haughty Countess, putting away her clinging grandchild.

"Why should you urge me? But lately you forbade what you now press."

"You dare to ask the reasons of my conduct, Katharine Morven; you shall hear them. Do you suppose that I seek the good of Margaret Morven, or her son? Do you think that I would not beggar both had I the power? There has been enmity and rivalship between us from our birth—there will be enmity and rivalship between us till our death. Could I make you a Countess, Edgar Morven should sue in vain;—but listen, stubborn girl;—you are not the Countess of Ermiston!—you are but Katharine Morven;—penniless, but for Mrs. Arnold's bounty."

"How is this? You sai
other day," exclaimed Ka
prise.

"Oh! you must have reaso
hear the why, and wherefore?
will not suffice. You shall
pity that I cannot speak in l
point in dispute, as I told
whether the title descends in
There has been but one insta
succeeding, and the point at
the grant by which she succe
to herself and daughters, or
future female heirs. We mai
Lord Ermiston the former. H
the original grant;—it is mislai
ed, they say, in a fire some yea
neral opinion is on his side—
same; yet the only deed in w
grant is referred to, is in our
Ermiston cannot produce the
but will not. It is in the han

son, who retained it accidentally, unconscious at the time of its value when called on by his Lordship to return the other papers; and you may go and see it if you doubt me. The grant to female heirs was limited to the Lady Margaret, and her daughters; so you are only Katharine Morven. Mine was no idle threat you see; become Lady Ermiston by marriage, or return to the obscurity from whence you came. Watson's ill will to Lord Ermiston, and his good will to me, counting on my liberality, ensures his not producing the document but at my desire; and it is my pleasure that it shall not be produced till after the marriage. You now see the folly of proposing to withdraw your confidence from Mr. Watson on keeping friends with him, rests your only chance of being a Countess."

"Do I understand you, madam? Is it possible that you can be a party to such a fraud? Can you believe that I would consent

leave my house for ever. To-day I spend at Richmond with my son; to-morrow let me find you all dutiful obedience. Speak not! I will hear nothing! I am not to be turned, or schooled by a mere baby. Splendour, or obscurity? make your choice, and look that it be a wise one; I will not hear that decision till to-morrow."

Lady Mexington left the room, and Katharine sank into a chair, pale, faint, and trembling; her haughty grandmother had left the house some time before she had recovered from the shock, and decided on her future course. That her nearest relative should be guilty of such dishonorable deception. That she should have been, though unintentionally, a sharer in the crime! and that this wrong should have been done to Lord Ermiston! Would he, would others believe that she had been an innocent tool? She was loath to reveal her grandmother's guilt to clear herself. There was but one course to pursue;—frank

and straightforward as she had al
she had neither the will, nor the w
in crooked paths.

Lady Mexington's pride had induc
insist on her grand-daughter's ke
separate establishment of servants a
riages; and Katharine was soon on
to Mr. Watson, who was fortunat
home.

"I understand from Lady Mexingto
you have the grant made to my ances
by which the descent in the female lin
limited to the Lady Margaret Morven,
her daughters," said Katharine abruptly, wh
the compliments of the morning had pass
between them. "Am I correct?"

Mr. Watson looked surprised, but afte
some hesitation answered in the affirma-
tive.

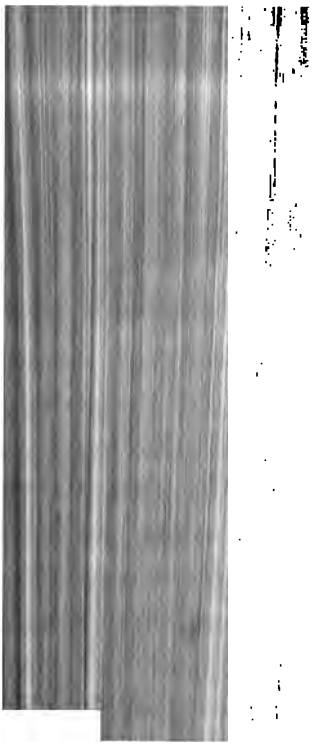
"And you consider that this grant, or
whatever I ought to term it, destroys my
claim to be Countess of Ermiston?"

"Certainly! my Lady, were it in the possession of the opposite party;—but I have so arranged with your noble grandmother, that it never shall be in their possession. I am surprised at Lady Mexington's having annoyed your Ladyship with the information; but trust we shall win our cause and humble Lord Ermiston, whose pride is intolerable;—or at all events, make a good bargain."

"Will you be kind enough to show me the deed, Mr. Watson?" said Katharine, making no comment on his remarks.

"Really, Lady Ermiston, for such I hope to see you, this is rather a singular request for a young lady. Deeds are but dry discourses to your lovely sex; and though we naturally in your presence drop technicalities, we find it difficult to make our meaning understood."

"I have Lady Mexington's sanction for the request," remarked Katharine coldly, disgusted with his fawning manner.



to comply, consider
the paper, how this
turned to his advan

Katharine held ou
but the wily lawyer d

" Your pardon, L
is too precious a
possession."

" As you please, M
intention of destroyin

" Of course not, m
fused at her emph
glance.

" You will not
me ?"

" You already un
and will find it so very

at the table, she prepared by following his reading to be quite certain that not a word was omitted.

"What can the girl mean?" thought Mr. Watson; but the decided manner of that girl again enforced compliance.

The lawyer read the whole, only occasionally interrupted by Katharine, who requested an explanation of all that she did not understand.

"You see, Lady Ermiston, it is as I told you; the gallantry of the monarch to your bewitching sex was individual, rather than general."

"I understand that I have not the slightest claim to be Countess of Ermiston. Good morning! I am obliged to you for the trouble you have taken;" said Katharine bowing coldly as she rose to depart.

Mr. Watson was puzzled.

"Excuse me, Lady Ermiston, but—"

"Miss Morven, if you please, sir."

Mr. Watson's look became still more troubled.

"Miss Morven then, since you will have so. Excuse me if I ask, as Lady Mexingt has named this document, whether I am consider you as acquainted with, and a par to, our agreement—that is arrangement co cerning it?"

"I am neither acquainted with nor a par to, any agreement or arrangement concerni that document, Mr. Watson. You shall he from me to-morrow."

She had entered the carriage before t lawyer had sufficiently recovered from h surprise to offer his attendance.

In a few minutes more Katharine was seat in Mrs. Carter's quiet parlour; relati enough of her embarrassment to accou for her own conduct, without exposing La Mexington.

Mrs. Carter was vexed, very vexed that her dear Miss Katharine was not to be a Countess after all; but half got over the vexation in her pleasure at finding that her opportune visit to a town relation had enabled her to be of service to her favourite, to say nothing that her favourite had applied to her, instead of to her grand connections; to these Kate must have more fully explained the conduct of her grandmother.

Early the next morning Katharine and Mrs. Carter were on their way to Farnley Lodge; and when the Countess of Mexington returned from Richmond a note from her grand-child was put into her hands, which occasioned one of those sudden bursts of fury to which her Ladyship was subject; yet the note, though short, was perfectly respectful, and showed the writer's wish to make no disclosure, but what circumstances might compel.

[To the Countess of Mexing

"MY DEAR MADAM,

"The inclosed
sent to Lord Ermiston, and Mr.
show my decision on the subject
day's conversation. Any furthe
that may be necessary I leave t
ship, and my late solicitor. Una
with your wishes, I quit your h
ence to your commands; and
friend Mrs. Colvin, accompan
Carter. Before I conclude, allow
you for the kindness received at
and to express a hope that the
distant when, allowing the impos
acting in the difficult situation i
placed, otherwise than I have,
meet with at least as kindly feeli
Wishing your Ladyship every
me still to sign myself,

"Your dutiful gra

"KATHARIN

The Countess's eye ran hastily over the enclosed notes; and she drew her breath more freely when she had concluded their perusal.

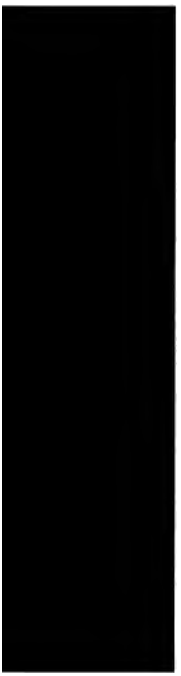
[To R. Watson, Esq.]

"As Miss Morven, of course, abandons all further claim to the title of Ermiston (now that she knows that claim to be unjust) she must beg Mr. Watson will take no further step to establish what she once believed her rights; and cease to consider himself as any longer employed by her in a legal capacity."

[To the Earl of Ermiston.]

"My Lord,

"Permit me to congratulate you on your right to the Earldom of Ermiston being fully established by a deed in the possession of Mr. Watson, of the existence of



is expressly limited to Lady
and her daughters; and mo
gret that, in ignorance of
were made on my behalf, pa
me. Pardon the unintentic
believe that no one can
wish you and Mrs. Morven
than

"Yours truly,

"KATHA

If Lady Mexington was
note, Mr. Watson was in
his; and an immediate inte
Countess and her solicitor
quence; in which, after havi

to reveal their dishonest purpose, they resolved on enacting the handsome towards Lord Ermiston, giving him to understand that the deed had only then, and by mere accident been brought to light. Whether his Lordship believed this matters not. Had the trouble and anxiety which these notes had cost poor Katharine been understood by those who received them, they might have been better satisfied with their contents, than she was herself.

CHAPTER VII.

"Dear Isabel,
I have a motion which imports your good,
Whereto if you'll a willing ear incline,
What's mine is yours, and what is yours is mine."
Measure for Measure.

"Oh! mamma, whose carriage is this?" asked Clara Colvin, looking from a window at Farnley Lodge.

"Indeed, child, I do not know; carriage and livery are strange; travellers I conclude by the post horses."

"Somebody kissing their hand; do look papa, oh, it is Katharine! dear Katharine!" exclaimed the child, clapping her hands in extacy, jumping off her father's knee, and running to the door.

"Yes, it is Katharine!" said Mrs. Colvin.

"Yes, it is Katharine!" observed her quiet husband; and away went that delicate wife, and the quiet husband, after the riotous child, to welcome the general favorite.

"Dear, dear Katharine!" exclaimed Clara, springing up, and clinging round her neck to the danger of pulling her down.

"My dear Katharine, how glad we are to see you," said Mrs. Colvin. "Get away you little monkey, you will choke the dear girl," releasing her visitor from Clara's hug.

"This is very kind, Katharine, I can assure you, we have missed you sadly," observed Mr. Colvin, shaking her warmly by the hand.

Katharine tried to speak her thanks for

t.
(
co
mys
cryin
" I
marke
ing to
" Do
vex you
grand as
side.

"No fear; we should never all three agree to that depend upon it, if one did; so you are quite secure."

"I do not think that Katharine is looking either well, or happy," remarked Mrs. Colvin to her husband, two days after their favorite's return.

"I do not think she is," replied her husband quietly.

"I hope she is not fretting at losing the title; it was provoking after having had a hope of it," continued his wife.

"I do not think Katharine cares one pin about the title; at least, just at present; and that is saying much, for you ladies do like gew-gaws. I rather think she is glad to be so handsomely quit of a distasteful lover, and tyrannical grandmother."

"Then what does blanch her cheek?"

"Perhaps not having followed my advice, but taken things for granted, instead of asking questions till all was clearly understood."

"I am sure, Charles,
thing."

"I do, my dear, — tha
curious."

"Now do not be tiresome
if you know any thing."

"I know nothing."

"But you guess something

"Yes; you and I guess a
not, Mrs. Carter?"

"I think we do, sir," she
look arch, an attempt which
crously ill with her very dem

"Who thought of seeing
exclaimed Mrs. Colvin, risin
visitor, who had entered unan

"Where is Katharine?—
Miss Morven?—I mean," a
eagerly, having ascertained th
in the room.

"In the library with Clara,
what is the meaning of all

Katharine comes in haste without a word of notice, telling a story, which though clear as far as it goes, would I suspect be more complete with an appendix; and the third day after comes down Herbert Eustace in equal haste, asking for Katharine the first thing, as though fearing that she had been devoured, and looking as if he had travelled all night!"

"You are right there."

"And pray what may be the meaning of all this rail-road velocity? Has Miss Morven run away from her guardian; and has her guardian run after her?"

"Exactly so, most sagacious cousin!" replied Herbert, with an embarrassed laugh.

"No wonder, when you never called to look after her; I should have run away myself."

"What do you mean? I called on her several times, but was always denied admittance."

"She tells a very different story; but here

she comes, and we will h
cleared up at once. Come i
arine Morven, and make ans
brought against you by your

Herbert advanced eagerly
who, scarcely touching his o
slightly answering his enquir
Mrs. Colvin with a heighten
Mr. Eustace, hurt at her
hands with Clara and his
at the moment.

"Now, Katharine, summo
quence to meet Herbert's cha
tremble at the thought," said

"Pardon me; Mr. Eustace
serious charge, and to a jestin
head must excuse my pleading

"No, you shall not escap
we will grant the accused a c
Colvin, who saw that Katha
was no jest, "It is my com
to have every thing explained;

vinced that if all acted in thisway there would be fewer sighs and more smiles. Now Herbert make your charge."

"Pardon me; I do not presume to make any charge against Miss Morven."

"Well! Well! Well! here is an exemplification of the negro proverb—'Trouble neber make heself," observed Mr. Colvin shrugging his shoulders. "You two will continue to look askance at each other for the next ten days, if I do not turn you out of the house before, because you have both a fancy to ride the high horse; but I have a fancy too, so Mary do you state the case, as opening counsel, and I will commit the prisoners if they refuse to plead. Only do not be long about it; for the bailiff is waiting for me to look at some oats. Male counsel consider themselves privileged to repeat things six times over; but you, being a woman, and therefore averse to talking, will content yourself with stating the particulars once. No laughing, or striking in

court;" he added stooping to
threatening hand. "Now Ma

"Very well! but your pun
deferred. To state the subject
rine Morven says that Herbert
called on her except the mo
arrival in town, and scarcely
met by chance; whilst Herbert
that he called several times
Katharine Morven always c
nied.

"I certainly called three
Herbert.

"I never heard of your call
fore could not have been de
tharine.

"Hey day prisoners! I h
have to commit you both for
often did you call Herbert Eus

"I called three times; th
after my return to town; and
sisted in sending up my car

was sure Lady Ermiston would see me; and each time did the servant return with the answer, that Lady Ermiston was particularly engaged."

"What say you to this, Katharine?"

"That the cards were never brought to me —that the messages were not of my sending," answered Katharine frankly.

"Who could have done this?"

"Lady Mexington, I have little doubt."

"Is it possible she could?"

"We will not discuss the possibility of what she could, or what she could not do," interrupted Katharine.

"Not guilty! on that charge; but what say you Herbert Eustace to scarcely speaking to Katharine Morven, when you met by chance?"

"I plead guilty, and throw myself on Miss Morven's mercy," said Herbert colouring. "I was piqued at her refusing to admit me; and saw every thing with a jaundiced eye."

" Since you throw your
the case is out of my jur
must award your punishme
asked her the reason for be
is a fresh proof of the wis
require explanations on a
rences; and never to believ
give credit to what you
strong evidence. Be you n
linquent Katharine.—The
and I am off to the bailiff."

" What punishment do
Morven? Humane judges
ration the previous suffering

" I will be generous, and
ness; I may not have bee
blame myself," said Kathari

" This is more than I des
yourself."

" I can guess as well as
my quiet husband," though
she heard his animated th

judge, and marked her confusion whilst receiving them.

"I know of old, your antipathy to telling your thoughts, or I should petition to learn on what your mind had been employed for the last ten minutes," said Herbert Eustace to Katharine Morven, on the following day, joining her whilst sitting alone in the library.

"Why for the last ten minutes particularly?"

"Because the expression of your features has been so various during that time."

"How can you tell?"

"Because I have been watching you unseen, too insignificant to attract your attention by my entrance."

"I beg your pardon."

"I do not require it. Will you tell me your thoughts instead?"

"Oh no! it is such very bad taste to speak of one's self."

" What a severe speech
divined that I was going to
autobiography."

" Were you? Delightful

" You will listen, and gi
then ?"

" Some other time; Clara
now," said Katharine rather

" No, now. The conclus
you;—Clara can wait. I p
years, all boys are so much
self willed, and mischievous
or bird's nests; learning eve
they should; torments to
strange to say, tolerated, na
those they tease the most."

" Admirable!" said Katha
tobiography will be perfectly
do not intend to make yours
—and you do intend to
will run through twenty ed
in its first form; and will

numbers, illustrated with a portrait of the author, to satisfy the still craving multitude."

"Oh, Miss Morven! is this your vaunted charity? I shall never have courage to proceed unless you promise to be more merciful."

"I was but lauding your originality. Go on; and I will endeavour to resemble the French gentleman who always looked as though he carried sugar in his pocket."

"I do mistrust you; but having once begun, like the Phantom Ship, I must on—on—till my race be run. I begin my history from the day I met you at Sallowfield."

"I pray you do not put me in your book, Mr. Eustace."

"I must; my history is to be the history of my feelings, and those you have controlled—compelled. At first I looked upon you only as an engaging child, you were so young, so frank, so gay, the spell of happy childhood still upon you, but Ermiston's attentions, and

ings, and a woman's p
at that very moment,
could not be beloved.
no winning way; it wa
of jealousy, than the re
was my first act of unkin
I am sure it will be my l
"It was no triumph t
yielded to his mother's
sensitive fastidiousness.
you—I was angry with hi
preferred to me, he should
worthy of your regard; bu
ing my suit, of seeking to s
affections never once entered
in no mood to be

"My cousin crossed my path in love—my uncle in ambition; I had neither land nor bride, and was compelled to exertion, so I set about making a fortune, and forgetting Katharine Darrell. The first, through diligence and good connections, I was in a fair way of accomplishing—the last—I believed complete. Had I met you in a situation befitting you, I should only have admired; but I met you under circumstances which called forth my pity, which compelled me to become your protector. I did protect you, and you spoke of gratitude; but the tone was cold as the feeling, and you knew this yourself: you still loved Ermiston, and could scarcely pardon me for doing that which he should have done. I was piqued, and resolved you should understand that I was no longer your lover, only your friend; you did understand this; and I was satisfied. If I did not love, I could feel for you, and really had no very christian feeling towards Mrs. Dixon. Clara's sudden

[redacted]

[illegible] as I had been the
[illegible] this fresh annoyan
[illegible] or my emotions, and
[illegible] you love the disappo
[illegible]ssion. and admiratio
[illegible]n.—I could be seen
[illegible]ssed indifference or
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[illegible]ng recognised cannot
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—never of all this I had
[illegible] I asked as your brot
[illegible]guardian: you looked u
[illegible]mself. always met me
[illegible]warmth. with open pleas
[illegible]rms I thought on which

this latter plea to myself long after I saw you an acknowledged favorite. My professional income increased to an extent that I could not have anticipated;—I might without imprudence think of selecting one to share my hopes and fears, and I found myself fancying a beloved companion by my side, listening, and replying to my words; and yet, by a strange timidity, I forbore to endow this vision with face or form. Circumstances prevented my usual visits to Farnley Lodge, and I began to get fretful and irritable. Mrs. Colvin wrote me word of Mr. Burnet's attentions, and I returned an unintelligible reply. I felt the impossibility of deferring my visit longer—I was sure Mr. Burnet was not a person to make you happy. I came—your first words were thanks, and I yielded to the spell which I could not resist. My fancy for a first love with all the forcible, and original arguments against the reluming of a worn out feeling were forgotten;—I pictured you sharing my

hopes and fears, in short, I fe
I did not care whether it was
or an old one renewed—I left
decided by philosophers ;—I l
sufficient !

" A slight confusion on yo
think that my looks had betra
and that you were not displ
not indifferent. I sought yo
did not shun me, though yo
thing to gratitude ; and I hoped
My cousin had no suspicion
urged me to plead for Mr. Bu
but felt that he being as the
better match, I ought not to
my own prospects were still
was ever by your side, I th
desire, and I was inclined to
call you worldling and coquet
not always very courteous ;
trol the expression of my
Our conversation just before

partly banished my fears, and I went with a lightened heart, resolved to learn my fate on my return; but on that return you were no longer Katharine Darrell. You had no longer a mad mother, which I admit had always pained me, but were possessed of rank and wealth. What right had I to expect that you would bestow these on a poor barrister? It seemed selfish and dishonorable to ask it, till I had the sanction of your titled relatives, who would be against me;—till mixing in the world you had learnt the value of your acquisitions. Contending feelings confused my explanation, and your emotion as I named Ermiston, made me believe you still attached to him. I will not pain or weary you by a detail of my jealous tortures. Your promise that no manœuvres of your grandmother should prevent our meeting somewhat reassured me; but when taking leave of you in town I did so with a presentiment of evil.

I saw you engrossed
dingly, Lady Mexing
the whole room ta
attentions, and yo
them. I watched
though I did not
were much interes
conversation, but
blushed and trem
disentangle his mo
him with an evid
you love him still,
prompting of you
the past was for
his feelings I h
Haddingly engag

in the morning. I called the next day, and the next—receiving the same answer. What was I to think ?

" I heard that Lord Haddingly had been rejected, that Lord Ermiston was preferred. Professional duties prevented a meeting for some days ; when I saw you,—and I had been long watching for your coming,—you entered a crowded room on my cousin's arm, and you and he were announced as man and wife. The buzz and the titter told you the general opinion, yet you clung to his arm for an instant, ere you relinquished it abruptly ; and allowed him to remain beside you the whole evening, conversing with an animation, an abandonment to gaiety that I had rarely seen in your happiest days, and which increased your powers of attraction. All others saw that his Lordship was *enivré d'amour*. Were you alone blinded to this ; or was the knowledge not displeasing? Mr. Bell guessed my feelings, and declaring your gaiety to be assum-

ed, bluntly urged me to seek
I was too proud—had you
Darrell still, I would have don
Countess of Ermiston I could
it was for you to explain wh
admission to your presence.
Ermiston lead you to your ca
ing words that I could not hea
ed an invitation from Lady M
him on the morrow. She ho
arranged without a trial she
look was significant and tr
guessed my love, and rejoic
Was it strange that I declined
By accident I learnt that Ern
you day, after day; I heard th
congratulated and had made no
doubt no longer. I tried to
convict you of the most hear
and immersed myself in busi
you.

"Looking over some papers

eye, which I had carelessly thrown aside on its arrival, without looking at the writing; it was from Mrs. Carter. I tore it open with a bitter feeling; it might name you, at least, it came from one who was attached to you. I learnt that you were not the Countess of Ermiston in your own right, that you would not become so in right of another—that you were on your way to Farnley Lodge.

"Then you were no coquette! How I raved at my own pride and folly! How I vexed myself at the time which that note had been left unread! I quitted London the first moment that in justice to others I could claim as my own, resolved to know my fate. You met me coldly, but that coldness has passed away.—May I not hope for ever? I have bared my heart before you—it is yours! Do you deem it worthy your acceptance? I have not much to offer in the way of wealth, and yet enough for my own moderate wishes will you but share it.—And you—you, who have

rejected wealth and rank can
How is my autobiography to
rests its conclusion."

"Better break it off abr
the more original," said K
over her book.

Herbert turned pale, and
"You are too frank, too g
Are my hopes vain? You
turn away. Are my word
Katharine, must I love a sec
a second time rejected?"

Her changing cheek sho
moved, and it seemed as if sh
to reply with calmness.

"Lord Ermiston's com
and he begs to speak a few
alone on particular business
entering at the moment.

"My compliments, and I
ship immediately," replied
a moment's hesitation, wi

Herbert, who drew back at her words, making no endeavour to stay her departure. She paused as she reached the door. "Pardon me; my absence will be brief."

Soft as were the tones they did not allay his jealousy.

"I entreat you to make neither haste nor excuse; I will wait your leisure—or to spare further trouble consider my autobiography concluded."

"You wrong me. Time has taught me to mistrust myself; and I would be quite assured, ere I assure another," said Katharine, gently, departing without waiting a reply.

Lord Ermiston was impatiently watching for her entrance, and advanced eagerly to meet her. There was strong feeling amounting almost to impetuosity in his manner, such as she had never seen before.

"I am come to tell you the respect, the admiration, the love, with which your conduct has inspired me. Under every circumstance

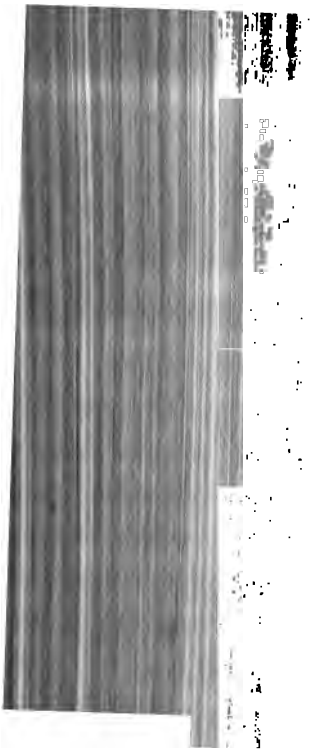
how noble! how superior! I blush for myself. I know I deserve your contempt, and yet I cannot endure that you should despise me. I would yield all I have to banish from your memory our parting interview at Sallowfield—our meeting at Swansea. Oh! that I had not yielded to my mother's entreaties! How gladly would she now receive you as a daughter! I rushed from your presence, shocked, wounded, for I had believed myself beloved. I left town immediately, and thus received your note but yesterday. I could not before press my suit as I desired; you might have thought it only the love of gain, the wish to make a bargain;—now I can press my wishes boldly, fearlessly; with all the ardour of true love, dreading no misconception. You have resigned the title;—take it back!—receive it with the hand of one who loves, and who has ever loved you; his pride having vainly struggled for the mastery. Do not bid me despair!"

"It cannot be! do not ask it—" said Katharine gently, touched by his emotion, but unwavering in her decision.

"Why can it not be? Will you never forgive, forget my cowardice?—for it was cowardice, the mean fear of the world's ridicule. Will no repentance wash away my crime? Will you forget my love, yet remember that desertion?"

"You do me—you do yourself wrong. I have long since forgiven all—but—"

"Stop, Katharine! do not say, as you said before that you have also ceased to love. I could not bear it. You are touched by my pleading, you feel for my anguish. The tears are in your eyes; and your tones are soft and gentle. Give me time—send me not from you—bid me not despair—make not the title you restore me worthless in my eyes. Let me hope that my regard may hereafter win a return—that as I love, so may I be beloved."



said in former day
once—and you did
"I did—but ther
I was young then,
what was in the hur
"You could neve
of your love proved
words; and I hav
would say."

The sternest hea
by his despairing,
Kate was never st
yet she could not gi
"Forgive me! I
meant not to say
parentage might
would only say that

"And you fulfilled that duty promptly—and with pleasure."

"Not promptly—and with much pain."

"But you have fulfilled it fully? Speak! say that there is not one thought of love remaining; that your embarrassment when we first met in town arose from the delicacy of generosity, not from the timidity of affection."

"I was pained and embarrassed at the idea of robbing you of your title."

He was silent for some moments, then spoke with a sort of desperate courage.

"You were ever candid;—do you love another?"

"Yes."

He gasped for breath—"and that other is—Herbert Eustace?"

"It is!" said Katharine blushing deeply.

He paced the room with hasty strides, then stopped abruptly.